







**Stories from**  
**The Winning of the West**













Stories from  
**The Winning of the  
West**

1769–1807

By  
**Theodore Roosevelt**

With an Introduction by  
**Lawrence F. Abbott**

*With 23 Illustrations in Photogravure*

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Under the title *Episodes from "The Winning of the West"*

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"O strange New World that yit wast never young,  
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,  
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed  
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,  
And who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,  
Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains,  
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain  
With each hard hand a vassal Ocean's mane;  
Thou skilled by Freedom and by gret events  
To pitch new states ez Old World men pitch tents,  
Thou taught by fate to know Jehovah's plan,  
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man.

. . . . .

Oh, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he  
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea,  
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,  
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs."

LOWELL.





## Publishers' Note

**I**F the life of Theodore Roosevelt had not been devoted to politics and practical affairs, he would most certainly have made a place for himself among the world's historians.

He possessed in a large measure the qualifications that go into the making of a historian. He had infinite industry and the capacity for taking pains. He could and did devote all the energy that was needed for the collection of material, and the consultation of authorities. He was particularly interested in the study and analysis of the character of the leading men who had the larger responsibility for the shaping of events. Above all he had imagination, without which no historical narrative can carry conviction.

As examples of the difference between the historian who has imagination and one who is merely a recorder of (more or less accurately presented) facts, we may refer to Motley's *History of the Dutch Republic* and George Trevelyan's *Prose Epics on Garibaldi* on the one hand, and to Alison's *Europe* and Hume's *England* on the other.

Roosevelt had the strongest possible belief in the future of America. He was confident that the Re-

public was to take its place in the Family of Nations as a leader in shaping the world's policies. He held that it was to do its part in protecting the smaller states and in preserving for all communities what Americans claim to be an elementary right—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

With this belief, he had a keen personal interest in studying the records of the founding and development of the Republic. In his history of the Winning of the West, he went over ground that had practically been untouched by the historians. He undertook to do for the records of the Middle West and Southwest what Parkman had done for the Northwest. His history stands as authoritative, vivid, and dramatic. The episodes, absolutely trustworthy as to detail, read like romances. Such stories as those of the capture of Vincennes, or the fight at King's Mountain, may fairly be compared with the best of Trevelyan and the best of Motley.

The "Winning of the West" constitutes an essential division of the history of the Republic and, therefore, of the history of the world.

G. H. P.

NEW YORK,  
September, 1920.

## Theodore Roosevelt, Pioneer

**T**HEODORE ROOSEVELT, although a Knickerbocker by a long ancestral line, was in spirit a thorough Westerner. That is to say he was himself a pioneer and admired the pioneer,—not the bravo or braggart, not the “two-gun” man and desperado, not the bandit and violator of law and order, but the man who, by a combination of rugged virility and keen intelligence went into the wilderness to cut the road and pave the way for democratic civilization. For the forty years of his seething active life the wilderness had a magnetic attraction for him, not because he was ascetic and reclusive but because he was intensely human and believed that the great, the worth-while men of the race are those who translate ideals into deeds and make new places and new communities civilized and habitable.

This is the reason, it seems to me, why his passion for hunting and exploration was entirely harmonious with his passion for political pioneering. He enjoyed the adventure, the rough, hardy, testing work of body and brain but he always had his eye fixed upon the ultimate result to be obtained,—the development, the extension, the strengthening of the social, political, and spiritual life of the nation and the race.

It was this pioneering spirit that first led him into politics. He relates that just after he graduated from Harvard, when he was about twenty-two years of age, he joined the Republican Club in the district in which he lived in New York City. A member of his family, somewhat more aristocratic and fastidious than he was, protested on the ground that "nobody but horse-car drivers and bartenders belonged to the club." Young Roosevelt denied the accuracy of the criticism but added that if it were true then the horse-car drivers and bartenders were likely to be the ruling class in the community and he proposed if he could to have some share in the ruling class.

This desire of Roosevelt's to be associated with men who were actually doing things is clearly displayed in some recollections which he published in *The Outlook* in 1912 to explain how he became a Progressive. In the course of this personal revelation he says:

I suppose I had a natural tendency to become a Progressive, anyhow. This is, I was naturally a democrat, in believing in fair play for everybody. But I grew toward my present position, not so much as the result of study in the library or the reading of books—although I have been very much helped by such study and by such reading—as by actually living and working with men under many different conditions and seeing their needs from many different points of view.

The first set of our people with whom I associated so intimately as to get on thoroughly sympathetic terms with them were cow-punchers, then on the ranges in the West. I was so impressed with them that in doing them justice I did injustice to equally good citizens elsewhere whom I did not know, and it was a number of years before I grew to understand—first by association with railway men, then with farmers, then with mechanics,

and so on—that the things that I specially liked about my cow-puncher friends were, after all, to be found fundamentally in railway men, in farmers, in blacksmiths, carpenters—in fact generally among my fellow American citizens.

Roosevelt's writings as well as his life are full of the traits of the pioneer. They reveal themselves unconsciously in the midst of a treatise on natural history or political and social economy. In his *Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter*,—a delightful interpretation of a self-supporting life in the open—in a chapter on the white-tail deer which the scientific naturalist would pronounce scholarly, he breaks away from scholastic bonds into the enthusiasm of the frontier hunter.

"Personally," he says, "I feel that the chase of any animal has in it two chief elements of attraction. The first is the chance given to be in the wilderness; to see the sights and hear the sounds of wild nature. The second is the demand made by the particular kind of chase upon the qualities of manliness and hardihood. . . . The keen, fresh air, the breath of the pine forests, the glassy stillness of the lake at sunset, the glory of sunrise among the mountains, the shimmer of the endless prairies, the ceaseless rustle of the cotton-wood leaves where the wagon is drawn up on the low bluff of the shrunken river—all these appeal intensely to any man, no matter what may be the game he happens to be following. . . .

"The qualities that make a good soldier are, in large part, the qualities that make a good hunter. Most important of all is the ability to shift for one's self, the

mixture of hardihood and resourcefulness which enables a man to tramp all day in the right direction, and, when night comes, to make the best of whatever opportunities for shelter and warmth may be at hand. Skill in the use of the rifle is another trait; quickness in seeing game, another; ability to take advantage of cover, yet another; while patience, endurance, keenness of observation, resolution, good nerves, and an instant readiness in an emergency, are all indispensable to a really good hunter. . . .

“It ought to be unnecessary to point out that the wilderness is not a place for those who are dependent upon luxuries, and above all for those who make a camping trip an excuse for debauchery. Neither the man who wants to take a French cook and champagne on a hunting-trip, nor his equally objectionable though less wealthy brother who is chiefly concerned with filling and emptying a large whiskey jug, has any place at all in the real life of the wilderness.”

This catalogue of the essential virtues of the pioneer calls to mind the story of Madame de Staël related by Lord Cromer in his master work on *Modern Egypt*. He narrates the qualities that are desirable in the under secretaries of a legation or embassy and says that young men in the diplomatic service possessing such qualities are as hard to find as the tutor sought for her children by a Frenchwoman of distinguished social position who in her difficult quest wrote to Madame de Staël for help. She must have, she said, a man with the zest of youth yet with the wisdom of experience; who was gay, lively,

and sympathetic and yet a strict disciplinarian; who valued the social graces and yet loved solid scholarship; who possessed firmness without severity, patience without weakness, polished manners without vanity, and a love of society without intrusiveness and self complacency. "My dear," replied Madame de Staël, "I know exactly the kind of man you are looking for, but I warn you that if I find him I shall marry him!"

One wonders if the characteristics which Roosevelt ascribes to the successful master of the wilderness did not make the Western pioneer marriageable! They did, indeed, and not one of the least things to the credit of our pioneers are the homes they built and the children they reared in partnership with their equally adventurous and brave wives and helpmeets. Judges, lawyers, teachers, statesmen,—professional men and men of affairs who have made their deep mark on American life have sprung from these frontier homes. The greatest of American jurists, John Marshall, was a frontiersman. And the best loved and most epoch-making of American Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, was himself a pioneer and a son of a pioneer.

Feeling the spirit and understanding from actual experience the life of the frontiersman it is no wonder that Theodore Roosevelt said of his *Winning of the West*: "It has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people."

His history deals almost exclusively with the Western colonial period,—that is to say with the period when the United States, just emerging from colonialism, formed a



fringe of civilization along the Atlantic sea-board and when its people were sending out feelers into the trackless wastes of Ohio, Kentucky, and the Mississippi valley, regions as unknown and as far off to the merchants of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia as Hispania, Gaul, and Britain were to the patricians of Rome under Julius Cæsar.

*The Winning of the West* describes the physical conquest of the relentless forces of Nature and the struggles with the aboriginal Indian inhabitants and only incidentally touches upon the planting of those seeds of political and social civilization which have made the development of the Central and Mississippi States one of the wonders of the modern world. But Roosevelt did not undertake a complete historical survey of the rise to power and affluence of the Western States of the Union. He wisely confined himself to a narrative of the birth and infancy of those States. Yet his *Winning of the West* is, nevertheless, as an excellent judge of contemporary writers, Brander Matthews, has said, "an abiding contribution to American historical literature."

This Western history was written when Theodore Roosevelt was less than thirty years old. Twenty years later,—to be exact in the last year of his Presidency,—he gave expression again to his admiration for those qualities of virility, courage, and public service which he believed were peculiarly, although not at all exclusively, produced by the Western pioneering spirit. This tribute, written at the White House on January 1, 1908, forms the concluding paragraph of his *Outdoor*

*Pastimes of an American Hunter* to which I have already referred:

“Appointments to public office must of course be made primarily because of the presumable fitness of the man for the position. But even the most rigid moralist ought to pardon the occasional inclusion of other considerations. I am glad that I have been able to put in office certain outdoor men who were typical leaders in the old life of the frontier, the daring adventurous life of warfare against wild man and wild nature which has now so nearly passed away. Bat Masterson, formerly of Dodge City and the Texas cattle trail, the most famous of the old time marshals, the iron-nerved gun fighters of the border, is now a deputy marshal in New York, under District Attorney Stimson—himself a big game hunter, by the way. Pat Garret, who slew Billy the Kid, I made Collector of Customs at El Paso; and other scarred-gun-fighters of the vanished frontier with to their credit deeds of prowess as great as those of either Masterson or Garret, now hold my commissions, on the Rio Grande, in the Territories, or here and there in the States of the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains.”

Thus crops out again at fifty years of age the spirit of the pioneer in Theodore Roosevelt which impelled him at twenty-five to become a rancher and frontiersman himself and at thirty to write in *The Winning of the West* the story of one of the great pioneering epochs of history.

LAWRENCE F. ABBOTT.

NEW YORK,

March 1, 1920.



## Editor's Preface

THE chronological narrative of *The Winning of the West* is here given in all the vigor of the original language of the author. With this picturesque chronicle are presented the more dramatic incidents in the western movement of our people—the great deeds of men in the conquest of the Wilderness, and the tale of how “the rifle-bearing freemen who founded their little republics on the western waters gradually solved the question of combining personal liberty with national union.”

The storm and stress of the Revolution obscured the steady advance of the backwoodsmen. The clash of battle quite outrang the crack of the solitary rifle and the tread of the Indians. But when the colonists along the sea at last won independence for the nation, the pioneers beyond the Alleghanies had already more than doubled the area of the land that was dedicated to “liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Of the individualism of those early days, of the slow drift toward Union, of the renewed strength that came with it, and of the acquisition of Louisiana, the narrative can speak for itself. The deeds of the frontiersmen belong to the history of the Na-

tion and are a source of common national pride; their names deserve the familiar use that follows deeds well done.

F. L. O.

PINE LODGE, VAN HISEVILLE, N. J.

## Preface

**I**T has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people. I am not blind to their manifold shortcomings, nor yet am I ignorant of their many strong and good qualities. For a number of years I spent most of my time on the frontier, and lived and worked like any other frontiersman. The wild country in which we dwelt and across which we wandered was in the Far West; and there were, of course, many features in which the life of a cattleman on the Great Plains and among the Rockies differed from that led by a backwoodsman in the Alleghany forests a century before. Yet the points of resemblance were far more numerous and striking. We guarded our herds of branded cattle and shaggy horses, hunted bear, bison, elk, and deer, established civil government, and put down evil-doers, white and red, on the banks of the Little Missouri and among the wooded, precipitous foot-hills of the Bighorn, exactly as did the pioneers who a hundred years previously built their log cabins beside the Kentucky or in the valleys of the Great Smokies. The men who have shared in the fast-vanishing frontier life of the present feel a peculiar sympathy with the already long-vanished frontier life of the past.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

SAGAMORE HILL,  
May, 1889.



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**Stories from**  
**The Winning of the West**



# Stories from The Winning of the West

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## CHAPTER I

### THE INDIANS OF THE BORDER

**W**HEN we declared ourselves an independent nation, there were on our borders three groups of Indian peoples. The northernmost were the Iroquois or Six Nations, who dwelt in New York, and stretched down into Pennsylvania. They had been for two centuries the terror of every other Indian tribe east of the Mississippi, as well as of the whites; but their strength had already departed.

In the Southwest, between the Tennessee—then called the Cherokee—and the Gulf, the so-called Appalachians lived. These were divided into five lax confederacies: the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles. They were far more numerous than the northwestern Indians, were less nomadic, and in consequence had more definite possession of particular localities; so that their lands were more densely peopled.

## Winning of the West

The Cherokees, some twelve thousand strong, were the mountaineers of their race. They dwelt among the blue-topped ridges and lofty peaks of the southern Alleghanies, in the wild and picturesque region where the present States of Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas join one another.

To the west of the Cherokees, on the banks of the Mississippi, were the Chickasaws, the smallest of the southern nations, numbering at the outside but four thousand persons. South of these lived the Choctaws, the rudest and historically the least important of these Indians.

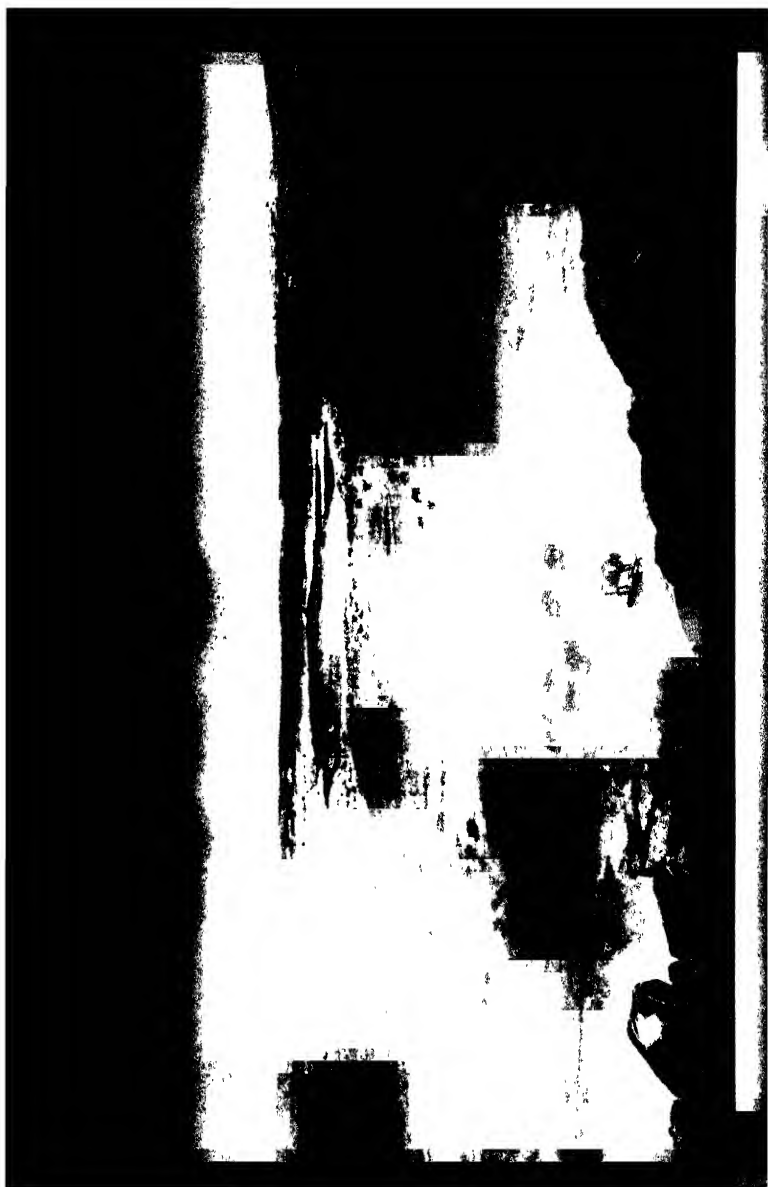
The Creeks were the strongest of all. Their southern bands, living in Florida, were generally considered as a separate confederacy, under the name of Seminoles. They numbered in all between twenty-five and thirty thousand, three-fourths of them being the Creeks proper, and the remainder Seminoles. They dwelt south of the Cherokees, and east of the Choctaws, adjoining the Georgians. The Creeks and Cherokees were thus by their position the barrier tribes of the South, who had to stand the brunt of our advance, and who acted as a buffer between us and the French and Spaniards of the Gulf and the lower Mississippi.

The towns of the Cherokees stretched from the high upland region, where rise the loftiest mountains of eastern America, to the warm, level, low country, the land of the cypress and the long-leaved pine. Each village stood by itself, in some fertile river-bottom, with around it apple orchards and fields of maize. Like the











other southern Indians, the Cherokees were more industrious than their northern neighbors, lived by tillage and agriculture as much as by hunting, and kept horses, hogs, and poultry.

The Cherokees were a bright, intelligent race, better fitted to "follow the white man's road" than any other Indians. Their confederacy was of the loosest kind. Every town acted just as it pleased, making war or peace with the other towns, or with whites, Choctaws, or Cherokees. In each there was a nominal head for peace and war, the high chief and the head warrior. But these chiefs had little control, and could not do much more than influence or advise their subjects; they were dependent on the will of the majority. It was said that never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had half the nation "taken the war talk" at the same time. As a consequence, war parties of Creeks were generally merely small bands of marauders, in search of scalps and plunder.

Between the Ohio and the Great Lakes, directly north of the Appalachian confederacies, and separated from them by the unpeopled wilderness now forming the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, dwelt another set of Indian tribes. They were ruder in life and manners than their southern kinsmen, less advanced towards civilization, but also far more warlike; they depended more on the chase and fishing, and much less on agriculture; they were savages, not merely barbarians; they were fewer in numbers, and were scattered over a wider expanse of territory.

Their relations with the Iroquois, who lay east of them, were generally hostile. They were also usually at odds with the southern Indians, but among themselves they were frequently united in time of war into a sort of lax league, and were collectively designated as the northwestern Indians. All the tribes belonged to the great Algonquin family, with two exceptions, the Winnebagos and the Wyandots. The Wyandots or Hurons lived near Detroit and along the south shore of Lake Erie, and were in battle our most redoubtable foes. They were close kin to the Iroquois, though bitter enemies to them, and they shared the desperate valor of these, their hostile kinsfolk, holding themselves above the surrounding Algonquins, with whom, nevertheless, they lived in peace and friendship.

The chief tribes of the Algonquins were well known and occupied tolerably definite locations. The Delawares dwelt farthest east, lying northwest of the upper Ohio, their lands adjoining those of the Senecas, the largest and most westernmost of the Six Nations. Westward of the Delawares lay the Shawnee villages, along the Scioto and on the Pickaway plains; but it must be remembered that the Shawnees, Delawares, and Wyandots were closely united and their villages were often mixed in together. Still farther to the west, the Miamis lived between the Miami and the Wabash, together with other associated tribes, the Piankeshaws and the Weas or Ouatinous. Farther still, around the French villages, dwelt those scattered survivors of the Illinois who had escaped the dire fate

which befell their fellow-tribesmen because they murdered Pontiac. Northward of this scanty people lived the Sacs and Foxes, and around the upper Great Lakes the numerous and powerful Pottawattamies, Ottawas, and Chippewas; fierce and treacherous warriors, who did not till the soil, and were hunters and fishers only, more savage even than the tribes that lay southeast of them.

The Wyandots, and the Algonquins who surrounded them, dwelt in a region of sunless, tangled forests; and all the wars we waged for the possession of the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi were carried on in the never-ending stretches of gloomy woodland. It was not an open forest. The underbrush grew dense and rank between the tall trees, making a cover so thick that it was in many places impenetrable, so thick that it nowhere gave a chance for human eye to see even as far as a bow could carry.

This dense forest was to the Indians a home in which they had lived from childhood, and where they were as much at ease as a farmer on his own acres. To their keen eyes, trained for generations to more than a wild beast's watchfulness, the wilderness was an open book; nothing at rest or in motion escaped them. They had begun to track game as soon as they could walk; a scrape on a tree trunk, a bruised leaf, a faint indentation of the soil, which the eye of no white man could see, all told them a tale as plainly as if it had been shouted in their ears.

Unlike the southern Indians, the villages of the

northwestern tribes were usually far from the frontier. Tireless, and careless of all hardship, they came silently out of unknown forests, robbed and murdered, and then disappeared again into the fathomless depths of the woods. Half of the terror they caused was due to the extreme difficulty of following them, and the absolute impossibility of forecasting their attacks. Without warning, and unseen until the moment they dealt the death stroke, they emerged from their forest fastnesses, the horror they caused being heightened no less by the mystery that shrouded them than by the dreadful nature of their ravages.

When hemmed in so that they had no hope of escape, the Indians fought to the death; but when a way of retreat was open, they would not stand cutting like British, French, or American regulars, and so, though with a nearly equal force, would retire if they were suffering heavily, even if they were causing their foes to suffer still more. This was not due to lack of courage; it was their system, for they were few in numbers, and they did not believe in losing their men. The Wyandots were exceptions to this rule, for with them it was a point of honor not to yield, and so they were of all the tribes the most dangerous in a pitched battle.

Among the Indians of the Northwest, generally so much alike that we need pay little heed to tribal distinctions, there was one body deserving especial and separate mention. Among the turbulent and jarring elements tossed into wild confusion by the shock of the contact between savages and the rude vanguard of

civilization, surrounded and threatened by the painted warriors of the woods no less than by the lawless white riflemen who lived on the stump-dotted clearings, there dwelt a group of peaceful beings who were destined to suffer a dire fate in the most lamentable and pitiable of all the tragedies which were played out in the heart of this great wilderness. These were the Moravian Indians. They were mostly Delawares, and had been converted by the indefatigable German missionaries, who taught the tranquil, Quaker-like creed of Count Zinzendorf. The zeal and success of the missionaries were attested by the marvelous change they had wrought in these converts; for they had transformed them in one generation from a restless, idle, blood-thirsty people of hunters and fishers, into an orderly, thrifty, industrious folk, believing with all their hearts the Christian religion in the form in which their teachers both preached and practised it. At first the missionaries, surrounded by their Indian converts, dwelt in Pennsylvania; but, harried and oppressed by their white neighbors, the submissive and patient Moravians left their homes and their cherished belongings, and in 1771 moved out into the wilderness northwest of the Ohio.

When the Moravians removed beyond the Ohio, they settled on the banks of the Muskingum, made clearings in the forest, and built themselves little towns, which they christened by such quaint names as Salem and Gnadenhütten; names that were pathetic symbols of the peace which the harmless and sadly submissive



wanderers so vainly sought. Here, in the forest, they worked and toiled, surrounded their clean, neatly kept villages with orchards and grain-fields, bred horses and cattle, and tried to do wrong to no man; all of each community meeting every day to worship and praise their Creator.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BACKWOODSMEN

**A** LONG the western frontier of the colonies that were soon to be the United States, among the foothills of the Alleghanies, on the slopes of the wooded mountains, and in the long trough-like valleys that lay between the ranges, dwelt a peculiar and characteristically American people.

These frontier folk, the people of the up-country, or back-country, who lived near and among the forest-clad mountains, were known to themselves and to others as backwoodsmen. They all bore a strong likeness to one or another in their habits of thought and ways of living, and differed markedly from the people of the older and more civilized communities to the eastward. The western border of our country was then formed by the great barrier-chains of the Alleghanies, the trend of the valleys being parallel to the sea-coast, and the mountains rising highest to the southward. It was difficult to cross the ranges from east to west, but it was both easy and natural to follow the valleys between.

The backwoodsmen were Americans by birth and parentage, and of mixed race; but the dominant strain in their blood was that of the Presbyterian Irish—the

Scotch-Irish as they were often called. Full credit has been awarded the Roundhead and the Cavalier for their leadership in our history; nor have we been altogether blind to the deeds of the Hollander and the Huguenot; but it is doubtful if we have wholly realized the importance of the part played by that stern and virile people, the Irish, whose preachers taught the creed of Knox and Calvin. These Irish representatives of the Covenanters were in the West almost what the Puritans were in the Northeast, and more than the Cavaliers were in the South. Mingled with the descendants of many other races, they formed the kernel of the distinctively and intensely American stock who were the pioneers of our people in their march westward.

The Presbyterian Irish were themselves already a mixed people. Though mainly descended from Scotch ancestors, many of them were of English, a few of French Huguenot extraction. They were the Protestants of the Protestants; they detested and despised the Catholics, whom their ancestors had conquered, and regarded the Episcopalians by whom they themselves had been oppressed, with a more sullen, but scarcely less intense hatred.

They did not begin to come to America in any numbers till after the opening of the eighteenth century; by 1730 they were fairly swarming across the ocean, for the most part in two streams, the larger going to the port of Philadelphia, the smaller to the port of Charleston. Pushing through the long settled lowlands of the seacoast, they at once made their abode at

the foot of the mountains, and became the outposts of civilization. From Pennsylvania, whither the great majority had come, they drifted south along the foothills, and down the long valleys, till they met their brethren from Charleston who had pushed up into the Carolina back-country. In this land of hills, covered by unbroken forest, they took root and flourished, stretching in a broad belt from north to south, a shield of sinewy men thrust in between the people of the seaboard and the red warriors of the wilderness.

The two facts of most importance to remember in dealing with our pioneer history are, first, that the western portions of Virginia and the Carolinas were peopled by an entirely different stock from that which had long existed in the tide-water region of those colonies; and, secondly, that, except for those in the Carolinas who came from Charleston, the immigrants of this stock were mostly from the North, from their great breeding-ground and nursery in western Pennsylvania.

That these Irish Presbyterians were a bold and hardy race is proved by their at once pushing past the settled regions and plunging into the wilderness as the leaders of the white advance. They were the first and last set of immigrants to do this; all others have merely followed in the wake of their predecessors. But, indeed, they were fitted to be Americans from the very start; they were kinsfolk of the Covenanters; they deemed it a religious duty to interpret their own Bible, and held for a divine right the election of their own clergy. For generations their whole ecclesiastic and scholastic sys-

tems had been fundamentally democratic. The creed of the backwoodsman who had a creed at all was Presbyterianism; for the Episcopacy of the tide-water lands obtained no foothold in the mountains, and the Methodists and Baptists had but just begun to appear in the West when the Revolution broke out.

Backwoods society was simple, and the duties and rights of each member of the family were plain and clear. The man was the armed protector and provider, the bread-winner; the woman was the housewife and child-bearer. They married young and their families were large, for they were strong and healthy, and their success in life depended on their own stout arms and willing hearts. There was everywhere great equality of conditions. Land was plenty and all else scarce; so courage, thrift, and industry were sure of their reward. All had small farms, with the few stock necessary to cultivate them; the farms being generally placed in the hollows, the division lines between them, if they were close together, being the tops of the ridges. The buildings of each farm were usually at its lowest point, as if in the center of an amphitheatre.

Each backwoodsman was not only a small farmer but also a hunter; for his wife and children depended for their meat upon the venison and bear's flesh procured by his rifle. His weapon was the long, small-bore, flint-lock rifle, clumsy, and ill-balanced, but exceedingly accurate. It was very heavy, and when upright, reached to the chin of a tall man; for the barrel of thick, soft iron, was four feet in length, while the

stock was short, and the butt scooped out. It was almost always fired from a rest, and rarely at long range.

In the backwoods there was very little money; barter was the common form of exchange, and peltries were often used as a circulating medium, a beaver, otter, fisher, dressed buckskin or large bearskin being reckoned as equal to two foxes or wildcats, four coons, or eight minks. A young man inherited nothing from his father but his strong frame and eager heart; but before him lay a whole continent wherein to pitch his farm, and he felt ready to marry as soon as he became of age, even though he had nothing but his clothes, his horses, his axe, and his rifle. If a girl was well off, and had been careful and industrious, she might herself bring a dowry, of a cow and a calf, a brood mare, a bed well stocked with blankets, and a chest containing her clothes.

The first lesson the backwoodsmen learnt was the necessity of self-help; the next, that such a community could only thrive if all joined in helping one another. Log-rollings, house-raisings, house-warmings, corn-shuckings, quiltings, and the like were occasions when all the neighbors came together to do what the family itself could hardly accomplish alone. Every such meeting was the occasion of a frolic and dance for the young people, whisky and rum being plentiful, and the host exerting his utmost power to spread the table with backwoods delicacies—bear-meat and venison, vegetables from the “truck patch,” where squashes, melons, beans, and the like were grown, wild fruits, bowls of

milk, and apple pies, which were the acknowledged standard of luxury.

The young men prided themselves on their bodily strength, and were always eager to contend against one another in athletic games, such as wrestling, racing, jumping, and lifting flour-barrels; and they also sought distinction in vying with one another at their work. Sometimes they strove against one another singly, sometimes they divided into parties, each bending all its energies to be first in shucking a given heap of corn or cutting (with sickles) an allotted patch of wheat. Among the men the bravos or bullies often were dandies also in the backwoods fashions, wearing their hair long and delighting in the rude finery of hunting-shirts embroidered with porcupine quills; they were loud, boastful, and profane, given to coarsely bantering one another. Brutally savage fights were frequent; the combatants, who were surrounded by rings of interested spectators, striking, kicking, biting, and gouging. We first hear of the noted scout and Indian fighter, Simon Kenton, as leaving a rival for dead after one of these ferocious duels, and fleeing from his home in terror of the punishment that might follow the deed. Such fights were specially frequent when the backwoodsmen went into the little frontier towns to see horse races or fairs.

A wedding was always a time of festival. If there was a church anywhere near, the bride rode thither on horseback behind her father, and after the service her pillion was shifted to the bridegroom's steed. If, as











generally happened, there was no church, the groom and his friends, all armed, rode to the house of the bride's father, plenty of whisky being drunk, and the men racing recklessly along the narrow bridle-paths, for there were few roads or wheeled vehicles in the backwoods. At the bride's house the ceremony was performed, and then a huge dinner was eaten; after which the fiddling and dancing began, and were continued all the afternoon, and most of the night as well. A party of girls stole off the bride and put her to bed in the loft above; and a party of young men then performed the like service for the groom. The fun was hearty and coarse, and the toasts always included one to the young couple, with the wish that they might have many big children; for as long as they could remember the backwoodsmen had lived at war, while looking ahead they saw no chance of its ever stopping, and so each son was regarded as a future warrior, a help to the whole community. The neighbors all joined again in chopping and rolling the logs for the young couple's future house, then in raising the house itself, and finally in feasting and dancing at the house-warming.

Each family did everything that could be done for itself. The father and sons worked with axe, hoe, and sickle. Almost every house contained a loom, and almost every woman was a weaver. Linsey-woolsey, made from flax grown near the cabin, and of wool from the backs of the few sheep, was the warmest and most substantial cloth; and when the flax crop failed and

the flocks were destroyed by wolves, the children had but scanty covering to hide their nakedness. The man tanned the buckskin, the woman was tailor and shoemaker, and made the deer-skin sifters to be used instead of bolting cloths. There were a few pewter spoons in use; but the table furniture consisted mainly of hand-made trenchers, platters, noggins, and bowls. The cradle was of peeled hickory bark. Ploughshares had to be imported, but harrows and sleds were made without difficulty; and the cooper work was well done. Each cabin had a hand-mill and a hominy block; the last was borrowed from the Indians, and was only a large block of wood, with a hole burned in the top, as a mortar, where the pestle was worked. If there were any sugar maples accessible, they were tapped every year.

But some articles, especially salt and iron, could not be produced in the backwoods. In order to get them each family collected during the year all the furs possible, these being valuable and yet easily carried on pack-horses, the sole means of transport. Then, after seeding time, in the fall, the people of a neighborhood ordinarily joined in sending down a train of peltry-laden pack-horses to some large seacoast or tidal-river trading town, where their burdens were bartered for the needed iron and salt.

The life of the backwoodsmen was one long struggle. The forest had to be felled, droughts, deep snows, freshets, cloudbursts, forest fires, and all the other dangers of a wilderness life faced. Swarms of deer-

flies, mosquitoes, and midges rendered life a torment in the weeks of hot weather. Rattlesnakes and copperheads were very plentiful, and, the former especially, constant sources of danger and death. Wolves and bears were incessant and inveterate foes of the live stock, and the cougar or panther occasionally attacked man as well.

These armed hunters, woodchoppers, and farmers were their own soldiers. They built and manned their own forts; they did their own fighting under their own commanders. There were no regiments of regular troops along the frontier. In the event of an Indian inroad each borderer had to defend himself until there was time for them all to gather together to repel or avenge it. Every man was accustomed to the use of arms from his childhood; when a boy was twelve years old he was given a rifle and made a fort-soldier, with a loophole where he was to stand if the station was attacked. The war was never-ending, for even the times of so-called peace were broken by forays and murders; a man might grow from babyhood to middle age on the border, and yet never remember a year in which some one of his neighbors did not fall a victim to the Indians.

Thus the backwoodsmen lived on the clearings they had hewed out of the everlasting forest; a grim, stern people, strong and simple, powerful for good and evil, swayed by gusts of stormy passion, the love of freedom rooted in their very hearts' core. Their lives were harsh and narrow; they gained their bread by their

blood and sweat, in the unending struggle with the wild ruggedness of nature. They suffered terrible injuries at the hands of the red men, and on their foes they waged a terrible warfare in return. They were relentless, revengeful, suspicious, knowing neither ruth nor pity; they were also upright, resolute, and fearless, loyal to their friends, and devoted to their country. In spite of their many failings, they were of all men the best fitted to conquer the wilderness and hold it against all comers.

## CHAPTER III

### BOONE AND THE LONG HUNTERS

1769-1774

**T**HE American backwoodsmen had surged up, wave upon wave, till their mass trembled in the troughs of the Alleghanies, ready to flood the continent beyond. The peoples threatened by them were dimly conscious of the danger which as yet only loomed in the distance. Spaniard and Creole Frenchman, Algonquin and Appalachian, were all uneasy as they began to feel the first faint pressure of the American advance.

As yet they had been shielded by the forest which lay over the land like an unrent mantle. All through the mountains, and far beyond, it stretched without a break; but towards the mouth of the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers the landscape became varied with open groves of woodland, with flower-strewn glades and great barrens or prairies of long grass. This region, one of the fairest in the world, was the debatable ground between the northern and the southern Indians. Neither dared dwell therein, but both used it as their hunting-grounds; and it was traversed from end to end by the well-marked war traces which they



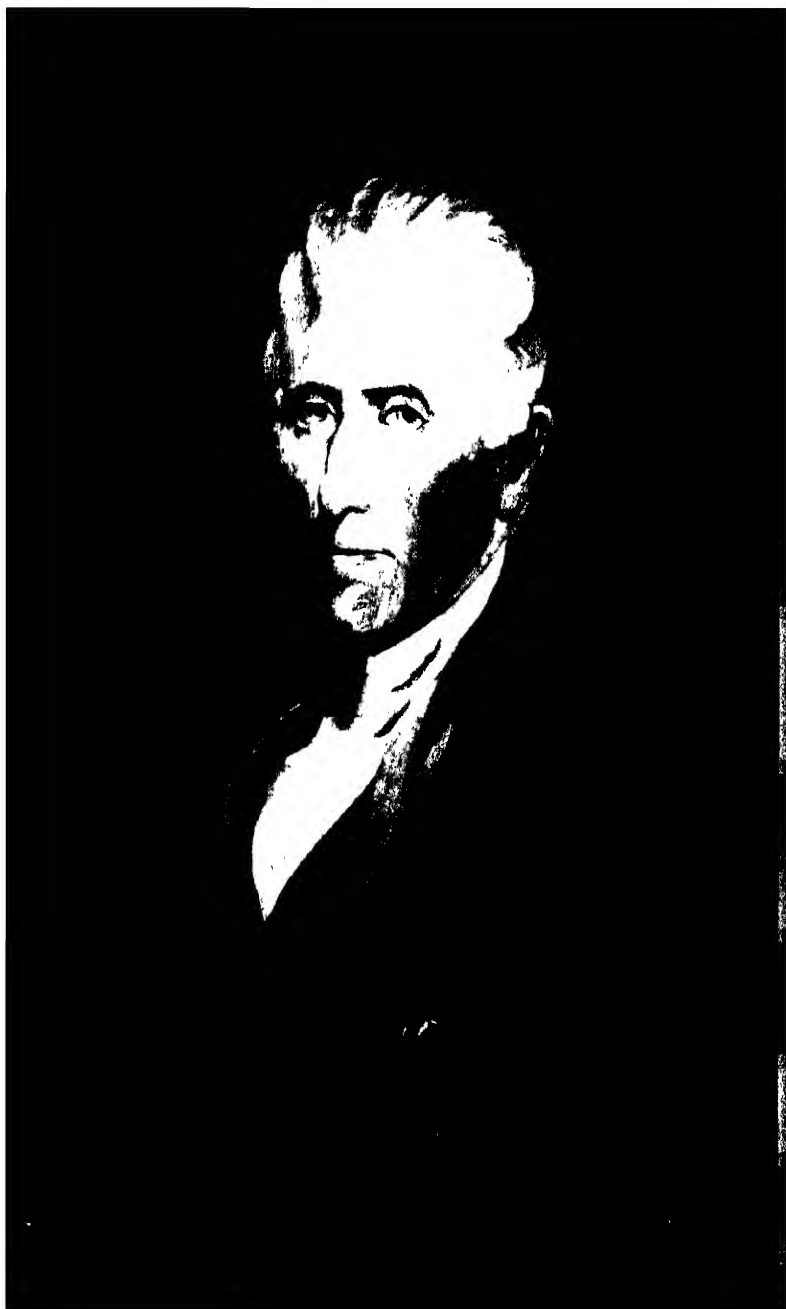
followed, when they invaded each other's territory. The whites, on trying to break through the barrier which hemmed them in from the western lands, naturally succeeded best when pressing along the line of least resistance; and so their first great advance was made into this debatable land, the hunting-grounds of the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw, and of the northern Algonquin and Wyandot.

Unknown and unnamed hunters and Indian traders had from time to time pushed some little way into the wilderness. One explorer had found and named the Cumberland river and mountains, and the great pass called Cumberland Gap. Others had hunted in the great bend of the Cumberland and in the woodland region of Kentucky, famed amongst the Indians for the abundance of the game. But their accounts excited no more than a passing interest; they came and went without comment, as lonely stragglers had come and gone for nearly a century. The backwoods civilization crept slowly westward without being influenced in its movements by their explorations.

Finally, however, among these hunters one arose whose wanderings were to bear fruit; who was destined to lead through the wilderness the first body of settlers that ever established a community in the far west, completely cut off from the seaboard colonies. This was Daniel Boone. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1734, but when only a boy had been brought with the rest of his family to the banks of the Yadkin in North Carolina. Here he grew up, and as soon as he came









of age he married, built a log hut, and made a clearing, whereon to farm like the rest of his backwoods neighbors.

With Boone hunting and exploration were passions, and the lonely life of the wilderness, with its bold, wild freedom, the only existence for which he really cared. He was a tall, spare, sinewy man, with eyes like an eagle's, and muscles that never tired; the toil and hardship of his life made no impress on his iron frame, unhurt by intemperance of any kind, and he lived for eighty-six years, a backwoods hunter to the end of his days. His thoughtful, quiet, pleasant face was the face of a man who never blustered or bullied, who would neither inflict nor suffer any wrong, and who had a limitless fund of fortitude, endurance, and indomitable resolution upon which to draw when fortune proved adverse. His self-command and patience, his daring, restless love of adventure, and, in time of danger, his absolute trust in his own powers and resources, all combined to render him peculiarly fitted to follow the career of which he was so fond.

Boone hunted in the edges of the wilderness, just over the mountains, at an early date. In the valley of Boone's Creek, a tributary of the Watauga, there is a beech tree still standing, on which can be faintly traced an inscription setting forth that "D. Boone cilled a bar on (this) tree in the year 1760."

His expeditions whetted his appetite for the unknown. He had heard of great hunting-grounds in the far interior, and on May 1, 1769, he left his home on the

Yadkin "to wander through the wilderness of America in quest of the country of Kentucky." Accompanied by five men he struck out towards the northwest, through the tangled mass of rugged mountains and gloomy forests. After five weeks of severe toil the little band stood on the threshold of the beautiful blue-grass region of Kentucky; a land of running waters, of groves and glades, of prairies, canebrakes, and stretches of lofty forest, teeming with game. The shaggy-maned herds of unwieldy buffalo—the bison as they should be called—had beaten out broad trails along which they had travelled for countless generations. The round-horned elk, with spreading, massive antlers, the lordliest of the deer tribe throughout the world, abounded, and like the buffalo traveled in bands not only through the woods but also across the reaches of waving grass land. The deer were extraordinarily numerous, and so were bears, while wolves and panthers were plentiful.

In December, after six months of successful hunting, the party was attacked by Indians, and Boone and a companion were captured. When they escaped, they found their camp broken up, and their party gone home. By good luck, about this time, Boone was joined by his brother, Squire Boone, who had set out to find him and to explore this same region. Soon afterwards Daniel's companion in captivity was killed by the Indians, while Squire's companion was frightened back to the settlements by the sight of red men. The two brothers remained alone on their hunting-grounds throughout the winter, living in a little cabin.

About the first of May, Squire set off alone to the settlements to procure horses and ammunition; while for three months Daniel Boone remained absolutely alone in the wilderness, without salt, sugar, or flour, and without the companionship of so much as a horse or a dog. But the solitude-loving hunter, dauntless and self-reliant, enjoyed to the full his wild, lonely life; he passed his days hunting and exploring, wandering hither and thither over the country, while at night he lay off in the canebrakes or thickets, without a fire, so as not to attract the Indians. Of the latter he saw many signs, and they sometimes came to his camp, but his sleepless wariness enabled him to avoid capture.

Late in July his brother returned, and met him according to appointment at the old camp. Other hunters also now came into the Kentucky wilderness, and Boone joined a small party of them for a short time. Soon after this, however, the increasing danger from the Indians drove Boone back to the valley of the Cumberland River, and in the spring of 1771 he returned to his home on the Yadkin.

In the summer of 1769, the same year that Boone started, a large band of hunters crossed the mountains to make a long hunt in the western wilderness with traps, rifles, and dogs, each bringing with him two or three horses. They made their way down the Cumberland until they came to the great barrens of tall grass, where they made a permanent camp, and returned to it at intervals to deposit their skins and peltries.



At the end of the year some of the adventurers returned home; others went north into the Kentucky country, where they hunted for several months before recrossing the mountains; while the remainder, led by an old hunter named Kasper Mansker, built two boats and hollowed out of logs two pirogues or dugouts—clumsier but tougher craft than the light birch-bark canoes—and started down the Cumberland. At the French Lick, where Nashville now stands, they saw enormous quantities of buffalo, elk, and other game, more than they had ever seen before in any one place. Some of their goods were taken by a party of Indians they met, but some French traders, whom they likewise encountered, treated them well and gave them salt, flour, tobacco, and taffia, the last being especially prized, as they had had no spirits for a year. They went down to Natchez, sold their furs, hides, oil, and tallow, and some returned by sea, while others, including Mansker, came overland with a drove of horses through the Indian nations to Georgia. On account of the length of time that all these men, as well as Boone and his companions, were absent, they were called the Long Hunters, and the fame of their hunting and exploring spread all along the border and greatly excited the young men.

Soon after the return of Boone and the Long Hunters, parties of surveyors came down the Ohio, mapping out its course and exploring the Kentucky lands that lay beside it. There were several surveyors also in a band that came into the wilderness in 1773, led by







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three young men named McAfee,—typical backwoodsmen, hardy and adventurous. They descended the Ohio and explored part of Kentucky, visiting the different licks. At one of these, famous because there were scattered about it the gigantic remains of the extinct mastodon, the McAfees made a tent by stretching their blankets over the huge fossil ribs, using the disjointed vertebræ as stools on which to sit. At another the explorers met with what might have proved a serious adventure. One of the McAfees and a companion were passing round its outskirts, when some others of the party fired at a gang of buffalos, which stampeded directly towards the two. While his companion scampered up a leaning mulberry bush, McAfee, less agile, leaped behind a tree trunk, where he stood sideways till the buffalo passed, their horns scraping off the bark on either side; then he looked round to see his friend “hanging in the mulberry bush like a coon.”

When the party started homewards across the Cumberland Mountains, it suffered terribly while making its way through the “desolate solitudes.” At last, sun-scorched and rain-beaten, foot-sore and leg-weary, they came out in Powell’s Valley, and followed the well-worn hunter’s trail thence to their homes.

In Powell’s Valley they met the company which Daniel Boone was just leading across the mountains, with the hope of making a permanent settlement in far distant Kentucky. Boone had sold his farm on the Yadkin and all the goods he could not carry with him, and in September, 1773, he started for Kentucky with

his wife and his children; five families, and forty men besides, went with him, driving their horses and cattle. On approaching the defiles of the Cumberland Mountains the party was attacked by Indians. Six men, including Boone's eldest son, were slain, and the cattle scattered; and though the backwoodsmen rallied and repulsed their assailants, yet they had suffered such loss and damage that they retreated and took up their abode temporarily on the Clinch River.

In the following year numerous parties of surveyors visited the land. One of these—eight men in all—headed by John Floyd, started on April 9, 1774, down the Kanawha in a canoe. They first surveyed two thousand acres for "Colo. Washington," and laid out another tract for Patrick Henry. On the way they encountered other parties of surveyors, and learned that an Indian war was threatened; for a party of thirteen settlers on the upper Ohio had been attacked, but had repelled their assailants, and in consequence the Shawnees had declared for war, and threatened thereafter to kill the Virginians and rob the Pennsylvanians wherever they found them. The reason for this discrimination in favor of the citizens of the Quaker State was that the Virginians with whom the Indians came chiefly in contact were settlers, whereas the Pennsylvanians were traders.

At the mouth of the Kanawha the adventurers found twenty or thirty men gathered together. Some of them joined Floyd, and raised his party to eighteen men, who started down the Ohio in four canoes. When they

reached the Kentucky, they split up. Floyd and his original party, after spending a week in the neighborhood, again embarked, and drifted down the Ohio. On May 26th they met two Delawares who had been sent down the river from Fort Pitt to gather their hunters and get them home, in view of the threatened hostilities between the Shawnees and Virginians. The news they brought was so alarming, that some of Floyd's companions became greatly alarmed, and wished to go straight on down the Mississippi; but Floyd swore that he would finish his work unless actually forced off. Three days afterwards they reached the Falls (now Louisville), where Floyd spent a fortnight, making surveys in every direction, and then started off to explore the land between the Salt River and the Kentucky.

Soon afterwards, Floyd and three companions left the others, agreeing to meet them on August 1st, at a cabin on the south side of the Kentucky, a few miles from the mouth of the Elkhorn. After surveying for three weeks, they then went to the cabin, several days before the appointed time; but to their surprise found everything scattered over the ground, while on a tree near the landing was written, "Alarmed by finding some people killed and we are gone down."

This left the four adventurers in a bad plight, as they had but fifteen rounds of powder left, and none of them knew the way home. However there was no help for it, and they started off. At last they struck Cumber-



land Gap, followed a blazed trail across it to Powell's Valley, and on August 9th came to the outlying settlements on Clinch River, where they found the settlers all in their wooden forts, because of the war with the Shawnees.

## CHAPTER IV

### LORD DUNMORE'S WAR, 1774

**O**N the eve of the Revolution, in 1774, the frontiersmen had planted themselves firmly among the Alleghanies, and in the southwest and northwest alike, the area of settlement already touched the home lands of the tribes. But it was in the northwest that the danger of collision was most imminent; for there the interests of the whites and Indians were, at the time, clashing more directly than ever.

Virginia under her charter claimed westward and northwestward from the ocean an indefinite tract, limited only by her ability to explore and hold it. Similar grants to rival colonies led to endless confusion, bitter feeling, and nearly brought on an inter-colonial war. Particularly was this the case with the claim of Virginia to the valley of the Monongahela and all of extreme western Pennsylvania, where in 1774 she proceeded boldly to exercise jurisdiction.

For a time in the early part of 1774 there seemed quite as much likelihood of the Virginians being drawn into a fight with the Pennsylvanians as with the Shawnees. While the Pennsylvanian commissioners were trying to come to an agreement concerning the bound-

aries with Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia at the time, the representatives of the two contesting parties at Fort Pitt were on the verge of actual collision. The earl's agent in the disputed territory was a Captain John Conolly, a man of violent temper and bad character. He formed the men favorable to his side into a sort of militia, with which he not only menaced both hostile and friendly Indians, but the adherents of the Pennsylvanian government as well. He destroyed their houses, killed their cattle and hogs, impressed their horses, and finally so angered them that they threatened to take refuge in the stockade at Fort Pitt, and defy him to open war.

There were on the border at the moment three or four men whose names are so intimately bound up with the history of this war, that they deserve a brief mention. One was Michael Cresap, a Maryland frontiersman of the regular pioneer type. The next was a man named Greathouse, of whom it is enough to know that, together with certain other men whose names have for the most part been forgotten, he did a deed such as could only be committed by inhuman and cowardly scoundrels.

The other two actors in this tragedy were both Indians, and were both men of much higher stamp. One was Cornstalk, the Shawnee chief, a great orator, a mighty warrior, a man who knew the value of his word and prized his honor, and who fronted death with quiet, disdainful heroism; and yet a fierce, cruel, and treacherous savage to those with whom he was at enmity. The









other was Logan, an Iroquois warrior, who lived at that time away from the bulk of his people. He was a man of splendid appearance; over six feet high, straight as a spear-shaft, with a countenance as open as it was brave and manly, until the wrongs he endured stamped on it an expression of gloomy ferocity. He had always been the friend of the white man, and had been noted particularly for his kindness and gentleness to children. One of the pioneer hunters has left on record the statement that he deemed "Logan the best specimen of humanity he ever met with, either white or red."

Early in the spring of 1774, the outlying settlers began again to suffer from the deeds of straggling Indians. Horses were stolen, one or two murders were committed, the inhabitants of the more lonely cabins fled to the forts, and the backwoodsmen began to threaten fierce vengeance. On April 16th, three traders in the employ of a man named Butler were attacked by some of the outlaw Cherokees, one killed, another wounded, and their goods plundered. Immediately after this Conolly issued an open letter, commanding the backwoodsmen to hold themselves in readiness to repel any attack by the Indians, as the Shawnees were hostile. Such a letter from Lord Dunmore's lieutenant amounted to a declaration of war, and there were sure to be plenty of backwoodsmen who would put a very liberal interpretation upon the order given them to repel an attack. Its effects were seen instantly. All the borderers prepared for war. Cresap was near Wheeling



at the time, with a band of hunters and scouts. As soon as they received Conolly's letter, they proceeded to declare war in the regular Indian style, calling a council, planting the war-post, and going through other savage ceremonies.

Unfortunately the first stroke fell on friendly Indians. The trader, Butler, spoken of above, in order to recover some of the peltries of which he had been robbed by the Cherokees, had sent a canoe with two friendly Shawnees towards the place of the massacre. On the 27th Cresap and his followers ambushed these men and killed and scalped them. Some of the better backwoodsmen strongly protested against this outrage; but the mass of them were excited and angered by the rumor of Indian hostilities, and the brutal and disorderly side of frontier character was for the moment uppermost. They threatened to kill whoever interfered with them, cursing the traders as being worse than the Indians; while Cresap boasted of the murder, and never said a word in condemnation of the still worse deeds that followed it. The next day he again led out his men and attacked another party of Shawnees, who had been trading near Pittsburg, killed one and wounded two others, one of the whites being also hurt.

On the following day the whole band of whites prepared to attack Logan's camp at Yellow Creek, some fifty miles distant. After going some miles they began to feel ashamed of their mission; calling a halt, they discussed the fact that the camp they were preparing to attack consisted exclusively of friendly

Indians, and mainly of women and children; and forthwith abandoned their proposed trip and returned home.

But Logan's people did not profit by Cresap's change of heart. On the last day of April a small party of men, women, and children, including almost all of Logan's kin, left his camp and crossed the river to visit Greathouse, as had been their custom; for he made a trade of selling rum to the savages, though Cresap had notified him to stop. The whole party were plied with liquor, and became helplessly drunk, in which condition Greathouse and his associated criminals fell on and massacred them, nine in all.

At once the frontier was in a blaze, and the Indians sent out runners to tell of the butchery and to summon the tribes for immediate and bloody vengeance. The Indians declared that they were not at war with Pennsylvania, and the latter in return adopted an attitude of neutrality, openly disclaiming any share in the wrong that had been done, and assuring the Indians that it rested solely on the shoulders of the Virginians. Indeed, the Shawnees protected the Pennsylvania traders from some hostile Mingos, while the Pennsylvania militia shielded a party of Shawnees from some of Conolly's men; and the Virginians, irritated by what they considered an abandonment of the white cause, were bent on destroying the Pennsylvania fur trade with the Indians.

Although the panic along the Pennsylvania frontier was intense, on the Virginian frontier it was more justi-

fiable; for dreadful ravages were committed, and the inhabitants were forced to gather together in their fortified villages, and could no longer cultivate their farms, except by stealth. Instead of being cowed, however, the backwoodsmen clamored to be led against their foes, and made most urgent appeals for powder and lead, of which there was a great scarcity.

Logan's rage had been terrible. The horrible treachery and brutality of the assault wherein his kinsfolk were slain made him mad for revenge, and he instantly fell on the settlements with a small band of warriors. On his first foray he took thirteen scalps, and ambushed the party that followed him, slaying their leader. He repeated these forays at least three times. Yet, in spite of his fierce craving for revenge, he still showed many of the traits that had made him beloved of his white friends. Having taken a prisoner, he refused to allow him to be tortured, and saved his life at the risk of his own. A few days afterwards he suddenly appeared to this prisoner with some gunpowder ink, and dictated to him a note. On his next expedition this note, tied to a war-club, was left in the house of a settler whose entire family was murdered. It ran as follows:

**"CAPTAIN CRESAP:**

"What did you kill my people on Yellow Creek for? The white people killed my kin at Conestoga, a great while ago, and I thought nothing of that. But you killed my kin again on Yellow Creek, and took my

cousin prisoner. Then I thought I must kill too; and I have been three times to war since; but the Indians are not angry, only myself.

*"July 21, 1774.*

**CAPTAIN JOHN LOGAN."**

## CHAPTER V

### THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT KANAWHA; AND LOGAN'S SPEECH, 1774

**M**EANWHILE Lord Dunmore, having garrisoned the frontier forts, three of which were put under the orders of Daniel Boone, was making ready a formidable army with which to overwhelm the hostile Indians. It was to be raised, and to march, in two wings or divisions, each fifteen hundred strong, which were to join at the mouth of the Great Kanawha. One wing, the right or northernmost, was to be commanded by the earl in person; while the other, composed exclusively of frontiersmen living among the mountains west and southwest of the Blue Ridge, was entrusted to General Andrew Lewis, a stalwart backwoods soldier.

While the backwoods general was mustering his unruly and turbulent host of skilled riflemen, the English earl led his own levies, some fifteen hundred strong, to Fort Pitt. Here he changed his plans, and decided not to join the other division, as he had agreed to do; but to entrench himself on the Scioto River, not far from the Indian town of Chillicothe. Thence he

sent out detachments that destroyed certain of the hostile towns.

But Lord Dunmore's army was not destined to strike the decisive blow in the contest. The great Shawnee chief, Cornstalk, was as wary and able as he was brave. He had from the first opposed the war with the whites; but as he had been unable to prevent it, he was now bent on bringing it to a successful issue. He was greatly outnumbered; but he had at his command over a thousand warriors, the pick of the young men of the western tribes. Since his foes were divided, he determined to strike first at the one who would least suspect a blow, but whose ruin, nevertheless, might involve that of the other. If Lewis's army could be surprised and overwhelmed, the fate of Lord Dunmore's would be merely a question of days. So without delay, Cornstalk, crafty in council, mighty in battle, and swift to carry out what he had planned, led his long files of warriors to the banks of the Ohio.

Lewis left the worst troops to garrison the small forts, and with his main force of eleven hundred men he dropped down the Kanawha, and on October 6th camped on Point Pleasant, the cape of land jutting out between the Ohio and the Kanawha. There was little order in the camp, and small attention was paid to picket and sentinel duty; the army, like a body of Indian warriors, relied for safety mainly upon the sharp-sighted watchfulness of the individual members and the activity of the hunting parties. Before daylight on the 10th small parties of hunters had, as usual,

left camp to supplement with game an unsatisfactory allowance of beef. Two of these hunters, when somewhat over a mile away, came upon a large party of Indians; when one was killed, the survivor ran back at full speed to give the alarm, telling those in camp that he had seen five acres of ground covered with Indians as thick as they could stand.

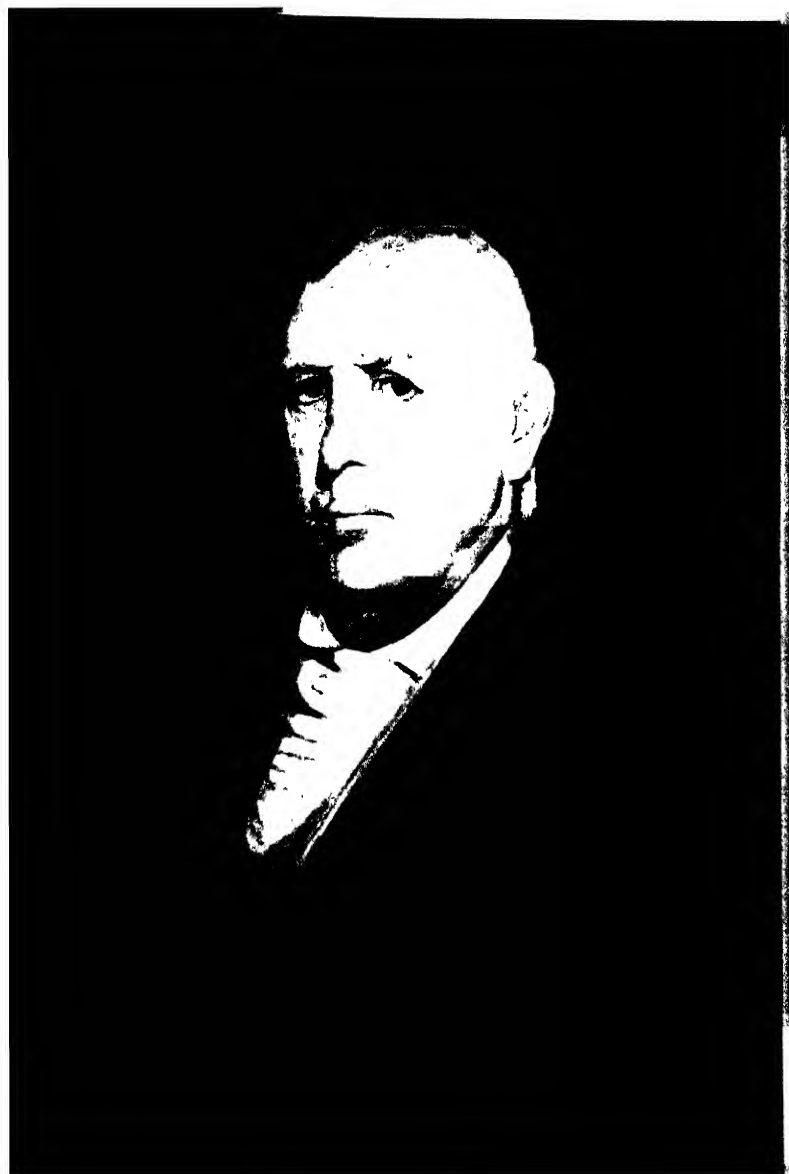
Instantly the drums beat to arms, and the backwoodsmen started from the ground, looked to their flints and priming, and were ready on the moment. The general, thinking he had only a scouting party to deal with, ordered out two detachments, each with one hundred and fifty men, one to march up the bank of the Ohio, the other to keep some little distance inland. They went about half a mile. Then, while it was still dusk, the men in camp, eagerly listening, heard the reports of three guns, immediately succeeded by a clash like a peal of thunder, as hundreds of rifles rang out together. It was evident that the attack was serious, and Colonel Field was at once despatched to the front with two hundred men.

He came just in time. At the first fire both of the scouts in front of the white line had been killed. The attack fell first, and with especial fury, on the first division, commanded by Charles Lewis, who himself was mortally wounded at the very outset. His men, who were drawn up on the high ground skirting Crooked Run, began to waver, and then gave way. At this moment, however, Colonel Field came up and restored the battle, while the backwoodsmen who had been left











in camp also hurried up to take part in the fight. General Lewis at last, fully awake to the danger, hastened to fortify the camp by felling timber so as to form a breastwork running across the point from the Ohio to the Kanawha; and through attending to it he was unable to take any personal part in the battle.

Meanwhile the frontiersmen began to push back their foes, led by Colonel Field. The latter himself, however, was soon slain; he was at the time behind a great tree, and was shot by two Indians on his right, while he was trying to get a shot at another on his left, who was distracting his attention by mocking and jeering at him. The command then fell on Captain Evan Shelby, who turned his company over to the charge of his son, Isaac. The troops fought on steadily, undaunted by the fall of their leaders, while the Indians attacked with the utmost skill, caution, and bravery. The fight was a succession of single combats, each man sheltering himself behind a stump, or rock, or tree-trunk, the superiority of the backwoodsmen in the use of the rifle being offset by the superiority of their foes in the art of hiding and of shielding themselves from harm. The hostile lines, though about a mile and a quarter in length, were so close together, being never more than twenty yards apart, that many of the combatants grappled in hand-to-hand fighting. The clatter of the rifles was incessant, while above the din could be heard the cries and groans of the wounded, and the shouts of the combatants, as each encouraged his own side or jeered savagely at his adversaries. The cheers

of the whites mingled with the appalling war-whoops and yells of their foes. The Indians also called out to the Americans in broken English, taunting them, and asking them why their fives were no longer whistling—for the fight was far too close to permit of any such music. Their headmen walked up and down behind their warriors, exhorting them to go in close, to shoot straight, and to bear themselves well in the fight; while throughout the action the whites opposite Cornstalk could hear his deep, sonorous voice as he cheered on his braves, and bade them “be strong, be strong.”

About noon the Indians tried to get round the flank of the whites, into their camp; but this movement was repulsed, and a party of the Americans followed up their advantage, and running along the banks of the Kanawha outflanked the enemy in turn. The Indians being pushed very hard now began to fall back, the best fighters covering the retreat, while the wounded were being carried off. The whites were forced to pursue with the greatest caution; for those of them who advanced heedlessly were certain to be ambushed and receive a smart check. Finally, about one o'clock, the Indians, in their retreat, reached a very strong position, where the underbrush was very close and there were many fallen logs and steep banks. Here they stood resolutely at bay, and the whites did not dare attack them in such a stronghold. So the action came almost to an end; though skirmishing went on until about an hour before sunset.

The Indians, having suffered too heavily to renew

the attack, under cover of darkness slipped away, and made a most skillful retreat, carrying all their wounded in safety across the Ohio. The exhausted Americans returned to their camp with a number of scalps, forty guns, and many tomahawks.

The battle had been bloody as well as stubborn. The whites, though the victors, had suffered more than their foes, losing some seventy-five men killed and one hundred and forty wounded, a fifth of their whole number. The Indians had not lost much more than half as many, about forty warriors being killed outright; and there was no chief of importance in that number. Whereas the Americans had seventeen officers killed or wounded, and lost in succession their second, third, and fourth in command.

The battle of the Great Kanawha was an American victory, for it was fought solely by the backwoodsmen themselves. Their immense superiority over regular troops in such contests can be readily seen when their triumph on this occasion is compared with the defeats previously suffered by Braddock's grenadiers and Grant's highlanders, at the hands of the same foes. It was a soldiers' battle, won by hard individual fighting; there was no display of generalship, except on Cornstalk's part. It was the most closely contested of any battle ever fought with the northwestern Indians; and it was the only victory gained over a large body of them by a force but slightly superior in numbers. Both because of the character of the fight itself, and because of the results that

flowed from it, it is worthy of being held in especial remembrance.

Lewis, leaving his sick and wounded in camp, crossed the Ohio, and pushed on in obedience to the orders received from Dunmore on the day before the battle. When near the earl's encampment he was informed that a treaty of peace was being negotiated with the Indians. He with difficulty restrained his men, now eager for more bloodshed, and finally induced them to march homewards, the earl riding down to them and giving his orders in person.

The spirit of the Indians had been broken by their defeat. Their stern old chief, Cornstalk, alone remained with unshaken heart, resolute to bid defiance to his foes and to fight the war out to the bitter end. But when the council of the headmen and war-chiefs was called it became evident that his tribesmen would not fight, and even his burning eloquence could not goad the warriors into again trying the hazard of battle. They listened unmoved and in sullen silence to the thrilling and impassioned words with which he urged them to march against the Long Knives, and, killing their women and children, themselves die fighting to the last man. Finally, when he saw he could not stir the hearts of his hearers, he announced that he himself would go and make peace. At that the warriors broke silence, and instantly sent runners to the earl's army to demand a truce.

The crestfallen Indians assented to all the terms proposed: to give up all white prisoners and stolen horses,

to surrender all claim to the lands south of the Ohio, and to give hostages as an earnest of good faith. But Cornstalk preserved through all the proceedings a bearing of proud defiance. He addressed the white leader in a tone rather that of a conqueror than of one of the conquered. Indeed, he himself was not conquered; though he felt that his tribesmen were craven, still he knew that his own soul feared nothing.

But Logan remained apart in the Mingo village, brooding over his wrongs and the vengeance he had taken. His fellows answered that he was like a mad dog, whose bristles were still up, but that they were gradually falling. When he was entreated to be present at the meeting, he responded that he was a warrior, not a councillor, and would not come. At last, after the Mingo camp had been destroyed, he sullenly acquiesced in, or at least ceased openly to oppose, the peace.

He would not come in person to Lord Dunmore; but to John Gibson, who had long lived among the Indians and knew thoroughly both their speech and their manners, Logan was willing to talk. Taking him aside, he suddenly addressed him in the finest outburst of savage eloquence of which we have any authentic record. The messenger took it down in writing, and, returning to camp, gave it to Lord Dunmore, who then read it to the whole backwoods army. It ran as follows:

“I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan’s cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked and he clothed him not?



During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his camp, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as I passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace; but do not harbor a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

The tall frontiersmen, rough Indian haters though they were, were so much impressed by the speech that in the evening it was the topic of conversation over their camp-fires. But they knew that Greathouse, not Cresap, had been the chief offender in the murder of Logan's family; and when they rallied Cresap as being so great a man that the Indians put everything on his shoulders, Cresap, much angered, swore that he had a good mind to tomahawk Greathouse for the murder.

As it was evident from the speech that Logan did not intend to remain on the war-path, Lord Dunmore marched home with his hostages. Within six months

he had brought the war to a successful end with results of immediate as well as far-reaching importance. It kept the Indians of the Northwest quiet for the first two years of the Revolutionary struggle, and meantime rendered possible the settlement of Kentucky and the winning of the West.

On the homeward march the officers of the army held a notable meeting to express their warm sympathy with the Continental Congress (which was then in session) and with their countrymen in the struggle of which the shadow was looming up with ever-increasing blackness. In a series of resolutions they set forth their devotion to their king, to the honor of his crown, and to the dignity of the British empire; but they added that this devotion would only last while the king deigned to rule over a free people; that their love for the liberty of America outweighed all other considerations, and that they would exert every power for its defence, not riotously, but when regularly called forth by the voice of their countrymen. They ended by tendering their thanks to Lord Dunmore, who was also warmly thanked by the Virginia Legislature, as well as by the frontiersmen of Fincastle County.

Of the further history of the great chief Cornstalk it may here be said that some three years later he came into the garrison at Point Pleasant (where the camp was located at the time of the battle of the Great Kanawha) to explain that, while he was anxious to keep at peace, his tribe were bent on going to war; and he frankly added that of course if they did so he

should have to join them. He and three other Indians, among them his son and the chief Redhawk, were detained as hostages. While they were thus confined in the fort, a member of a company of rangers was killed by the Indians near by; whereupon his comrades, headed by their captain, rushed in furious anger into the fort to slay the hostages. Cornstalk heard them and knew that his hour had come; with unmoved countenance he exhorted his son not to fear, for it was the will of the Great Spirit that they should die there together; then, as the murderers burst into the room, he quietly rose to meet them, and fell dead pierced by seven or eight bullets. His son and his comrades were likewise butchered.

## CHAPTER VI

### BOONE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KENTUCKY, 1775

**L**ORD DUNMORE'S war made possible the two-fold character of the Revolutionary war, wherein on the one hand the Americans won by conquest and colonization new lands for their children, and on the other wrought out their national independence of the British king. Had Cornstalk and his fellow-chiefs kept their hosts unbroken, they would undoubtedly have swept Kentucky clear of settlers in 1775—as was done by the mere rumor of their hostility the preceding summer. Their defeat gave the opportunity for Boone to settle Kentucky, for Robertson to settle Middle Tennessee, and for Clark to conquer Illinois and the Northwest; it was the first in the chain of causes that gave us for our western frontier in 1783 the Mississippi and not the Alleghanies.

A speculative North Carolinian, Henderson, had for some time been planning to establish a proprietary colony beyond the mountains, as a bold stroke to restore his ruined fortunes; and early in 1775, as the time seemed favorable, he proceeded to put his venturesome scheme into execution. For years he had been in close business relations with Boone; and the latter had

attempted to lead a band of actual settlers to Kentucky in 1773.

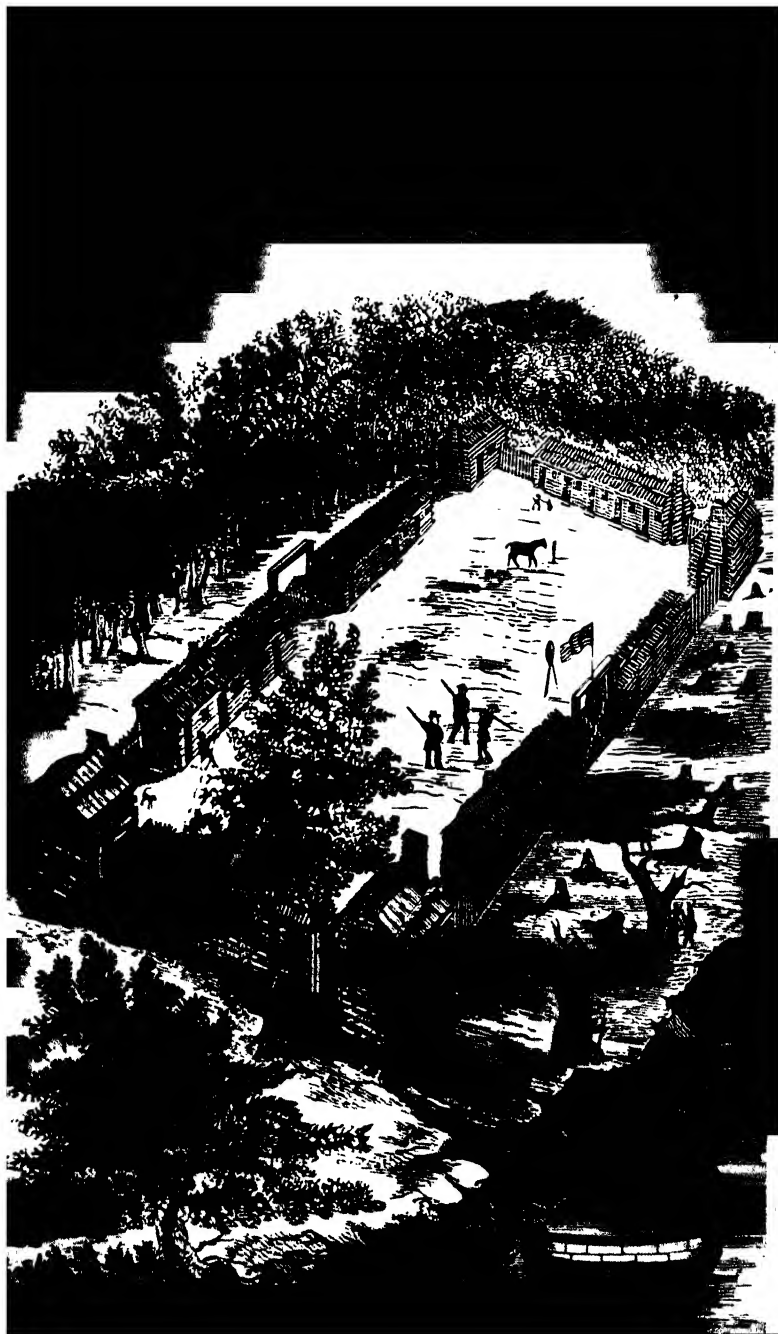
Henderson, and those with him in his scheme of land speculation, began to open negotiations with the Cherokees as soon as the victory of the Great Kanawha (October 10, 1774) lessened the danger to be apprehended from the northwestern Indians; for he was anxious to get a good Indian title to his proposed new colony. When the Indian delegate appointed to examine Henderson's goods made a favorable report in January, 1775, the Overhill Cherokees were bidden to assemble at the Sycamore Shoals of the Watauga, where, on the 17th of March, Oconostota and two other chiefs signed the treaty in the presence and with the assent of some twelve hundred of their tribe; for all who could had come to the treaty grounds. Henderson thus obtained a grant of all the lands lying along and between the Kentucky and the Cumberland rivers, paying for it 10,000 pounds of lawful English money, mainly in merchandise. It took a number of days before the treaty was finally concluded; no rum was allowed to be sold; but herds of beeves were driven in, that the Indians might make a feast.

As soon as it became evident that the Indians would consent to the treaty, Henderson sent Boone ahead with a company of thirty men to clear a trail from the Holston to the Kentucky—the first regular path opened into the wilderness, forever famous in Kentucky history as the Wilderness Road.

After a fortnight's hard work the party had almost











reached the banks of the Kentucky River, when, half an hour before daybreak, they were attacked by some Indians, who killed two of them and wounded a third; the others stood their ground without suffering further loss or damage till it grew light, when the Indians silently drew off. Continuing his course, Boone reached the Kentucky River, and on April 1st began to build Boonsborough, on an open plain where there was a lick with two sulphur springs; and he at once sent a special messenger to hurry forward the main body under Henderson, writing to the latter:

“My advice to you, sir, is to come or send as soon as possible. Your company is desired greatly, for the people are very uneasy, but are willing to stay and venture their lives with you, and now is the time to frustrate the intentions of the Indians, and keep the country whilst we are in it. If we give way to them now, it will ever be the case.”

Henderson, having started as soon as he finished the treaty, was obliged to halt and leave his wagons in Powell's Valley, for beyond that even so skillful a road-maker as Boone had not been able to find or make a way passable for wheels. Accordingly, their goods and implements were placed on pack-horses, and the company started again.

The journey was hard and tiresome. At times it rained; and again there were heavy snowstorms. The mountains were very steep, and it was painfully

laborious work to climb them while chopping out a way for the pack-train. At night a watch had to be kept for Indians. It was only here and there that the beasts got good grazing. Sometimes the horses had their saddles turned while struggling through the woods. But the great difficulty came in crossing the creeks, where the banks were rotten, the bottom bad, or the water deep; then the horses would get mired down and wet their packs, or they would have to be swum across while their loads were ferried over on logs. One day, in going along a creek, they had to cross it no less than fifty times, by "very bad foards."

On the 7th of April they met Boone's runner, bearing tidings of the loss occasioned by the Indians, and also found parties of would-be settlers, who, panic-stricken by the sudden forays, were fleeing from the country. Henderson's party kept on with good courage, and persuaded quite a number of the fugitives to turn back with them. Some of these men, however, were not leaving the country because of fright, for many, among them the McAfees, had not brought out their families, but had simply come to clear the ground, build cabins, plant corn, and turn some branded cattle loose in the woods; and, returning to the settlements, they were planning to bring out their wives and children the following year.

Henderson's company came into the beautiful Kentucky country in mid-April, when it looked its best, and reached the fort that Boone was building on the 20th of the month, being welcomed to its wooden walls by a

rifle volley. They at once set to with a will to finish it. It was a typical fortified village, such as the frontiersmen built everywhere in the West and Southwest during the years that they were pushing their way across the continent in the teeth of fierce and harassing warfare. It was in shape a parallelogram, some two hundred and fifty feet long and half as wide. At each corner was a two-storied loopholed block-house to act as a bastion. The stout log cabins were arranged in straight lines, so that their outer sides formed part of the wall, the spaces between them being filled with a high stockade, made of heavy squared timbers thrust upright into the ground, and bound together within by a horizontal stringer near the top. They were loopholed like the block-houses. The heavy wooden gates, closed with stout bars, were flanked without by the block-houses and within by small windows cut in the nearest cabins. The houses had sharp, sloping roofs, made of huge clapboards, and these great wooden slabs were kept in place by long poles, bound with withes to the rafters. When danger threatened, the cattle were kept in the open space in the middle.

Three other similar forts or stations were built about the same time as Boonsborough, namely: Harrodstown, Boiling Springs, and St. Asaphs, better known as Logan's Station, from its founder's name. These all lay to the southwest, some thirty odd miles from Boonsborough. Every such fort or station served as the rallying-place for the country round about, the stronghold in which the people dwelt during time of

danger; and later on, when all danger had long ceased, it often grew into the chief town of the district. This system enabled the inhabitants to combine for defense, and yet to take up the large tracts of four to fourteen hundred acres, to which they were by law entitled. Thus the settlers were scattered over large areas, and, as elsewhere in the Southwest, the county and not the town became the governmental unit.

Henderson, having established a land agency at Boonsborough, at once proceeded to deed to the colonists many hundred thousand acres, the surveying of which fell largely to Boone, whose initials became familiar landmarks in the colony. With equal celerity he caused delegates to be elected to the legislature of Transylvania, as he had early named the colony, and began immediately to organize a government for it. The delegates, seventeen in all, met at Boonsborough, on a level plain of white clover, under an old elm, a fit council-house for this pioneer legislature of game hunters and Indian fighters.

These weather-beaten backwoods warriors, men of genuine force of character, behaved with a dignity and wisdom that would have well become any legislative body. After listening to a speech from Henderson in which he outlined the needs of the new country, they provided for courts, for the militia, for punishing criminals, fixing sheriffs' and clerks' fees, and for issuing writs of attachment. Boone proposed a scheme for game protection, which the legislature immediately adopted, and likewise an "act for preserving the breed

of horses"—for, from the very outset, the Kentuckians showed the love for fine horses and for horse-racing which has ever since distinguished them. And it was likewise stipulated that there should be complete religious freedom and toleration for all sects.

Transylvania, however, was between two millstones. The settlers revolted against its authority, and appealed to Virginia; for it was hopeless to expect that the bold men who conquered the wilderness would be content to hold it, even at a small quit-rent, from Henderson. Lord Dunmore denounced Henderson and his acts; and it was in vain that Transylvania appealed to the Continental Congress, asking leave to send a delegate thereto, and asserting its devotion to the American cause; for Jefferson and Patrick Henry were members of that body, and though they agreed with Lord Dunmore in nothing else, were quite as determined as he that Kentucky should remain part of Virginia. So Transylvania's fitful life flickered out of existence; the Virginia Legislature in 1778 solemnly annulling the title of the company, but very properly recompensing the originators by the gift of two hundred thousand acres. North Carolina pursued a similar course; and Henderson, after the collapse of his colony, drifts out of history.

Soon after the fort at Boonsborough was built, Boone went back to North Carolina for his family, and in the fall returned, bringing out a band of new settlers. A few roving hunters and daring pioneer settlers also came to his fort in the fall; among them, the famous

scout, Simon Kenton, and John Todd, a man of high and noble character and well-trained mind, who afterwards fell by Boone's side when in command at the fatal battle of Blue Licks. In this year also Clark and Shelby first came to Kentucky.

All this time there penetrated through the somber forests faint echoes of the strife the men of the sea-coast had just begun against the British king. The rumors woke to passionate loyalty the hearts of the pioneers; and a roaming party of hunters, when camped on a branch of the Elkhorn, called the spot Lexington, in honor of the Massachusetts minute-men, about whose death and victory they had just heard.

By the end of 1775 the Americans had gained firm foothold in Kentucky.











## CHAPTER VII

### THE WAR IN THE NORTHWEST,

1777-1778

**I**N the fall of 1776 at Detroit great councils were held by all the northwestern tribes, to whom the Six Nations sent the white belt of peace, that they might cease their feuds and join against the Americans. The later councils were summoned by Henry Hamilton, the British lieutenant-governor of the northwestern region, whose headquarters were at Detroit. He was an ambitious, energetic, unscrupulous man, of bold character, who wielded great influence over the Indians; and the conduct of the war in the West, as well as the entire management of frontier affairs, was entrusted to him by the British Government. He had been ordered to enlist the Indians on the British side, and have them ready to act against the Americans in the spring; and accordingly he gathered the tribes together. He himself took part in the war-talks, plying the Indians with presents and fire-water no less than with speeches and promises. The headmen of the different tribes, as they grew excited, passed one another black, red, or bloody, tomahawk belts, as tokens of the vengeance to be

taken on their white foes. One Delaware chief still held out for neutrality, announcing that if he had to side with either set of combatants, it would be with the "buckskins," or backwoodsmen, and not with the red-coats; but the bulk of the warriors sympathized with the Half King of the Wyandots when he said that the Long Knives had for years interfered with the Indians' hunting, and that now at last it was the Indians' turn to threaten revenge.

Hamilton was for the next two years the mainspring of Indian hostility to the Americans in the Northwest; and he rapidly acquired the venomous hatred of the backwoodsmen, who nicknamed him the "hair-buyer," asserting that he put a price on the scalps of Americans. Hamilton himself had been ordered by his immediate official superior to assail the borders of Pennsylvania and Virginia with his savages, to destroy the crops and buildings of the settlers who had advanced beyond the mountains, and to give to his Indian allies—the Hurons, Shawnees, and other tribes—all the land of which they thus took possession. With such allies as Hamilton had, this order was tantamount to proclaiming a war of extermination, waged with appalling and horrible cruelty against the settlers.

All through the winter of '76-'77 the northwestern Indians were preparing to take up the tomahawk. Runners were sent through the leafless, frozen woods from one to another of their winter camps. In each bleak, frail village, each snow-hidden cluster of bark wigwams, the painted, half-naked warriors danced the

war-dance, and sang the war-song, beating the ground with their war-clubs and keeping time with their feet to the rhythmic chant as they moved in rings round the peeled post, into which they struck their hatchets. The hereditary sachems, the peace chiefs, could no longer control the young men. The braves made ready their weapons and battle gear; their bodies were painted red and black, the plumes of the war eagle were braided into their long scalp-locks, and some put on necklaces of bears' claws, and head-dresses made of panther skin, or of the shaggy and horned frontlet of the buffalo. Before the snow was off the ground the war parties crossed the Ohio and fell on the frontiers from the Monongahela and Kanawha to the Kentucky.

Among others in the spring of 1777, the stockade at Wheeling was attacked by two or three hundred Indians; with them came a party of Rangers, recruited by Hamilton from the French, British, and Tories at Detroit. Most of the men from inside the fort were drawn into an ambuscade and were slain; but the remainder made good the defense, helped by the women, who ran the lead into bullets, cooled and loaded the guns, and even, when the rush was made, assisted to repel it by firing through the loopholes. After making a determined effort to storm the stockade, in which some of the boldest warriors were slain while trying in vain to batter down the gates with heavy timbers, the baffled Indians were obliged to retire discomfited. The siege is chiefly memorable because of an incident con-

nected with a leading man of the neighborhood, a Major McColloch.

When Wheeling was invested, McColloch tried to break into it, riding a favorite old white horse. But the Indians intercepted him, and hemmed him in on the brink of an almost perpendicular slope, some three hundred feet high. McColloch had no thought of surrendering, to die by fire at the stake; so, wheeling short round, he spurred his steed over the brink. The old horse never faltered, but plunged headlong down the steep, boulder-covered slope. Good luck, aided by the wonderful skill of the rider and the marvelous strength and sure-footedness of his steed, rewarded one of the most daring feats of horsemanship of which we have any authentic record. There was a crash, the shock of a heavy body, half springing, half falling, a scramble among loose rocks, and the snapping of saplings and bushes; and in another moment the awestruck Indians above saw their unharmed foe galloping his gallant white horse in safety across the plain. To this day the place is known by the name of McColloch's Leap.

Likewise, Boonsborough, which was held by twenty-two riflemen, was attacked twice, once in April and again in July. The first time the garrison was taken by surprise; the wounded included Boone himself. The Indians promptly withdrew when they found they could not carry the fort by a sudden assault. On the second occasion the whites were on their guard, and, though there were but thirteen unhurt men in the fort, they easily beat off the assailants, and slew half a dozen

of them. This time the Indians stayed round two days, keeping up a heavy fire, under cover of which they several times tried to burn the fort.

Early in 1778 a severe calamity befell the settlements. In January Boone went, with twenty-nine other men, to the Blue Licks to make salt for the different garrisons—for hitherto this necessary of life had been brought in, at great trouble and expense, from the settlements. The following month, having sent back three men with loads of salt, he and all the others were surprised and captured by a party of eighty or ninety Miamis, led by two Frenchmen. When surrounded, so that there was no hope of escape, Boone agreed that all should surrender on condition of being well treated. The Indians on this occasion loyally kept faith. The two Frenchmen were anxious to improve their capture by attacking Boonsborough; but the savages were satisfied with their success, and insisted on returning to their villages. Boone was taken first to Chillicothe, the chief Shawnee town on the Little Miami, and then to Detroit, where Hamilton and the other Englishmen treated him well, and tried to ransom him for a hundred pounds sterling. However, the Indians had become very much attached to him, and refused the ransom, taking their prisoner back to Chillicothe. Here he was adopted into the tribe, and remained for two months, winning the good will of the Shawnees by his cheerfulness and his skill as a hunter, being careful not to rouse their jealousy by any too great display of skill at the shooting-matches.



Hamilton kept urging the Indians to repeat their ravages of the preceding year, so they determined forthwith to fall on the frontier in force. By their war parties, and the accompanying bands of Tories, Hamilton sent placards to be distributed among the frontiersmen, endeavoring both by threat and by promise of reward to make them desert the patriot cause.

In June a large war party gathered at Chillicothe to march against Boonsborough, and Boone determined to escape at all hazards, so that he might warn his friends. One morning before sunrise he eluded the vigilance of his Indian companions and started through the woods for his home, where he arrived in four days, having had but one meal during the whole journey of a hundred and sixty miles.

On reaching Boonsborough he at once set about putting the fort in good condition. His escape had probably disconcerted the Indian war party, for no immediate attack was made on the fort. After waiting until August he got tired of inaction, and made a foray into the Indian country himself with nineteen men, defeating a small party of his foes on the Scioto. At the same time he learned that the main body of the Miamis had at last marched against Boonsborough. Instantly he retraced his steps with all possible speed, passed by the Indians, and reached the threatened fort a day before they did.

On the eighth day of the month the savages appeared before the stockade. They were between three and four hundred in number, Shawnees and Miamis, and

were led by Captain Daigniau de Quindre, a noted Detroit partisan; with him were eleven other Frenchmen, besides the Indian chiefs. They marched into view with British and French colors flying, and formally summoned the little wooden fort to surrender in the name of His Britannic Majesty. Boone first got a respite of two days to consider De Quindre's request, and occupied the time in getting the horses and cattle into the fort. At the end of the two days the Frenchman came in person to the walls to hear the answer to his proposition; whereupon Boone, thanking him in the name of the defenders for having given them time to prepare for defense, told him that now they laughed at his attack. De Quindre, mortified at being outwitted, set a trap in his turn for Boone. He assured the latter that his orders from Detroit were to capture, not to destroy, the garrison, and proposed that nine of their number should come out and hold a treaty. The terms of the treaty are not mentioned; apparently it was to be one of neutrality, Boonsborough acting on its own account, and De Quindre agreeing to march his forces peaceably off when it was concluded.

Boone accepted the proposition, but insisted upon the conference being held within sixty yards of the fort. After the treaty was concluded, the Indians proposed to shake hands with the nine treaty-makers, and promptly grappled them; but the borderers wrested themselves free and fled to the fort under a heavy fire.

The Indians then attacked the fort, surrounding it on every side and keeping up a constant fire. The

whites replied in kind, but the combatants were so well covered that little damage was done. At night the Indians pitched torches of cane and hickory bark against the stockade, in the vain effort to set it on fire, and De Quindre tried to undermine the walls, starting from the water-mark. But Boone discovered the attempt and sunk a trench as a countermine. Then De Quindre gave up and retreated on August 20th, after nine days' fighting, in which the whites had but two killed and four wounded; nor was the loss of the Indians much heavier. This was the last siege of Boonsborough.

The savages continued to annoy the border throughout the year 1778. The extent of their ravages can be seen from the fact that during the summer months those around Detroit alone brought in to Hamilton eighty-one scalps and thirty-four prisoners, seventeen of whom they surrendered to the British, keeping the others either to make them slaves or else to put them to death with torture.

Boone, on the other hand, roamed restlessly over the country, spying out and harrying the Indian war parties, and making it his business to meet the incoming bands of settlers and to protect and guide them on the way to their intended homes. When not on other duty, he hunted steadily, and met with many adventures, still handed down by tradition.

One band of painted marauders carried off Boone's daughter. She was in a canoe with two other girls on the river near Boonsborough when they were pounced









on by five Indians. The two younger girls gave way to despair when captured; but Betsey Callaway was sure they would be followed and rescued. To mark the line of their flight she broke off twigs from the bushes, and when threatened with the tomahawk for doing this, she tore off strips from her dress. The Indians carefully covered their trail, compelling the girls to walk apart, as their captors did, in the thick cane, and to wade up and down the little brooks.

Boone started in pursuit the same evening. All next day he followed the tangled trail like a bloodhound, and early the following morning came on the Indians, camped by a buffalo calf which they had just killed and were about to cook. The rescue was managed very adroitly; for had any warning been given, the Indians would have instantly killed their captives, according to their invariable custom. Boone and his companion, Floyd, each shot one of the savages, and the remaining three escaped almost naked, without gun, tomahawk, or scalping-knife. The girls were unharmed; for the Indians rarely molested their captives on the journey to the home towns, unless their strength gave out, when they were tomahawked without mercy.

Much the greatest loss, both to Indians and whites, was caused by this unending, personal warfare. Every hunter, almost every settler, was always in imminent danger of Indian attack, and in return was ever ready, either alone or with one or two companions, to make excursions against the tribes for scalps and horses. One or two of Simon Kenton's experiences during this



year may be mentioned less for their own sake than as examples of innumerable similar deeds that were done.

Kenton was a man of wonderful strength and agility, famous as a runner and wrestler, an unerring shot, and a perfect woodsman. Like so many of these early Indian fighters, he was not at all bloodthirsty; in fact, it was hard to rouse him to wrath. When aroused, however, few could stand before the terrible fury of his anger. Once, in a fight outside the stockade at Boonsborough, he saved the life of Boone by shooting an Indian who was on the point of tomahawking him, and won praise and admiration from him who was as little likely to praise the deeds of others as he was to mention his own.

Kenton, on the expedition to the Scioto, pushing ahead of the rest, was attracted by the sound of laughter in a cane-brake. Hiding himself, he soon saw two Indians riding along on one small pony and chatting and laughing together in great good humor. Aiming carefully, he brought down both at once, one dead and the other severely wounded. As he rushed up to finish his work, his quick ears caught a rustle in the cane, and looking around he saw two more Indians aiming at him. A rapid spring to one side made both balls miss. Other Indians came up; but, at the same time, Boone and his companions appeared; and a brisk skirmish followed. When Boone returned home, Kenton with another stayed behind and later brought back in triumph four good horses.

Much pleased with his success, he shortly made another raid into the Indian country with two companions, this time driving off one hundred and sixty horses, which were brought in safety to the banks of the Ohio. But the river was so rough that the horses, as soon as they were beyond their depth, would turn round and swim back. The reckless adventurers, unwilling to leave the booty, stayed so long, waiting for a lull in the gale, that they were overtaken by the Indians, and, as their guns had become wet and useless, one of them was killed, another escaped, and Kenton himself was captured. When the Indians asked him if "Captain Boone" had sent him to steal horses, and he answered frankly that the stealing was his own idea, they beat him lustily with their ramrods, at the same time showering on him epithets that showed they had at least learned the profanity of the traders. At night they staked him out tied so that he could move neither hand nor foot; and during the day he was bound on an unbroken horse, with his hands tied behind him so that he could not protect his face from the trees and bushes. After three days he reached the town of Chillicothe, stiff, sore, and bleeding.

Next morning he was led out to run the gauntlet of a row of men, women, and boys, each with a tomahawk, switch, or club. When the moment for starting arrived, the big drum was beaten, and Kenton sprang forward in the race. Keeping his wits about him, he suddenly turned to one side, and, dodging those who got in his way, by a sudden double he rushed through an opening

in the crowd, and reached the council-house, which protected him for the time being.

He was not further molested that evening. Next morning a council was held to decide whether he should be immediately burned at the stake, or should first be led round to the different villages. The warriors sat in a ring, passing the war-club from one to another; those who passed it in silence thereby voted in favor of sparing the prisoner for the moment, while those who struck it violently on the ground thus indicated their belief that he should be immediately put to death. The former prevailed, and Kenton was led from town to town to be switched and beaten by the women and boys, or forced to run the gauntlet, while sand was thrown in his eyes and guns loaded with powder fired against his body to burn his flesh. Once, while on the march, he made a bold rush for liberty, breaking out of the line and running into the forest; but by ill luck, when almost exhausted, he came against another party of Indians.

After this he was often terribly abused by his captors; once his shoulder was cut open with an axe; at another time his face was painted black, the death color; and he was twice sentenced to be burned alive. But each time he was saved at the last moment, once through the renegade Girty, his old companion in arms at the time of Lord Dunmore's war, and again by the great Mingo chief, Logan. At last, after having run the gauntlet eight times and been thrice tied to the stake, he was ransomed by some traders who hoped to

get valuable information from him about the border forts, and took him to Detroit. Here he stayed until his battered, wounded body was healed. Then he determined to escape, and formed his plan in concert with two other Kentuckians, who had been in Boone's party that was captured at the Blue Licks. They managed to secure some guns, got safely off, and came straight down through the great forests to the Ohio, reaching their homes in safety.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CLARK'S CONQUEST OF THE ILLINOIS, 1778

**K**ENTUCKY had been settled, chiefly through Boone's instrumentality, in the year that saw the first fighting of the Revolution, and it had been held ever since, Boone still playing the greatest part in the defense. There had developed by the side of Boone in this school of the Wilderness a brilliant young Virginian named George Rogers Clark. He was of good family, well-educated, and, being fond of a wild, roving life, he followed the profession of a backwoods surveyor. His adventurous spirit early brought him to Kentucky, where he quickly became a leader among the daring hunters of the border. He took part in Lord Dunmore's war; and later he was instrumental in making Kentucky a county of Virginia (1776). Residing at Harrodsburg, Clark took part in the defense of Kentucky in the petty warfare of the years '76-'77; but his farseeing and ambitious soul now prompted him to use Kentucky as a base from which to conquer the vast region northwest of the Ohio.

The country beyond the Ohio was not, like Kentucky, a tenantless and debatable hunting-ground. It was the seat of powerful and warlike Indian confeder-

acies, and of clusters of ancient French hamlets which had been founded generations before the Kentucky pioneers were born; and it also contained posts that were garrisoned and held by the soldiers of the British king.

In 1777 Clark sent two young hunters as spies to the Illinois country and to the neighborhood of Vincennes, though neither to them nor to any one else did he breathe a hint of the plan that was in his mind. They brought back word that, though some of the adventurous young men often joined either the British or the Indian war parties, yet that the bulk of the French population took but little interest in the struggle, were lukewarm, in their allegiance to the British flag, and were somewhat awed by what they had heard of the backwoodsmen. Clark judged from this report that it would not be difficult to keep the French neutral if a bold policy, strong as well as conciliatory, were pursued towards them; and that but a small force would be needed to enable a resolute and capable leader to conquer at least the southern part of the country. But it was impossible to raise such a body among the scantily garrisoned fortified villages of Kentucky; for the pioneers, though warlike and fond of fighting, were primarily settlers; their soldiering came in as a secondary occupation.

So Clark, in October, 1777, journeyed back to the eastern counties of Virginia, realizing that he must look there for help. After a week's rest from his long ride he laid his plans before Patrick Henry, then gov-

ernor of the State, and urged their adoption with fiery enthusiasm. The matter could not be laid before the Assembly, nor made public in any way; for the hazard would be increased tenfold if the strictest secrecy were not preserved. Finally Henry authorized Clark to raise seven companies, each of fifty men, who were to act as militia and to be paid as such. He also advanced him the sum of twelve hundred pounds, and gave him an order on the authorities at Pittsburg for boats, supplies, and ammunition; while three of the most prominent Virginia gentlemen agreed in writing to do their best to induce the Virginia Legislature to grant to each of the adventurers three hundred acres of the conquered land, if they were successful. He was likewise given the commission of colonel, with instructions to raise his men solely from the frontier counties west of the Blue Ridge, so as not to weaken the people of the seacoast region in their struggle against the British.

Governor Henry's open letter of instructions merely ordered Clark to go to the relief of Kentucky. He carried with him also the secret letter which bade him attack the Illinois regions; for he had decided to assail this first, because, if defeated, he would then be able to take refuge in the Spanish dominions beyond the Mississippi. He met with the utmost difficulty in raising men; for, aside from accidental causes and the jealousy between Virginians and Pennsylvanians, many people were strongly opposed to sending any men to Kentucky at all, deeming the drain on their strength more serious than the value of the new land warranted.

But Clark never for a moment wavered or lost sight of his main object, and at last got together four small companies of frontiersmen. In May, 1778, he left the Redstone settlements, taking not only his troops—one hundred and fifty in all—but also a considerable number of private adventurers and settlers with their families. He touched at Pittsburg and Wheeling to get his stores. Then the flotilla of clumsy flatboats rowed and drifted cautiously down the Ohio between the melancholy and unbroken reaches of Indian-haunted forest, until it reached the falls, where the river broke into great rapids of swift water. This spot he chose, both because from it he could threaten and hold in check the different Indian tribes, and because he deemed it wise to have some fort to protect in the future the craft that might engage in the river trade, when they stopped to prepare for the passage of the rapids. The few families still remaining with the expedition settled here on an island, and in the autumn moved to the mainland, where afterwards Louisville grew up, named in honor of the French king, who was then our ally.

Here Clark received news of the alliance with France, which he hoped would render easier his task of winning over the inhabitants of the Illinois. He now disclosed to his men the real object of his expedition. The Kentuckians and those who had come down the river with him hailed the adventure with eager enthusiasm, pledged him their hearty support, and followed him with staunch and unflinching loyalty. But the



Holston recruits, who had not come under his personal influence, had not reckoned on an expedition so long and so dangerous, and in the night most of them left the camp and fled into the woods.

When the horsemen who pursued the deserters came back, a day of mirth and rejoicing was spent; and then, on the 24th of June, Clark's boats, putting out from shore, shot the falls at the very moment that there was an eclipse of the sun, at which the frontiersmen wondered greatly, but for the most part held it to be a good omen. Clark double-manned his oars and rowed night and day until he reached a small island off the mouth of the Tennessee, where he halted to make his final preparations, and there fortunately met a little party of American hunters, who had recently been in the French settlements. They told him that the royal commandant was a Frenchman, Rocheblave, whose headquarters were at the town of Kaskaskia; that the fort was in good repair, the militia were well-drilled and in constant readiness to repel attack, while spies were continually watching the Mississippi, and the Indians and the *coureurs des bois* were warned to be on the lookout for any American force. If the party were discovered, the French, having the advantage in numbers and in the strength of their works, would undoubtedly repel them, having been taught to hate and dread the backwoodsmen as more brutal and terrible than Indians. But they thought that a surprise would enable Clark to do as he wished, and they undertook to guide him by the quickest and shortest route to the towns.

Setting out with their new allies, the little body of less than two hundred men started north across the wilderness; and on the fourth of July reached the river Kaskaskia, within three miles of the town, which lay on the farther bank. They kept in the woods until after it grew dusk, and then marched silently to a little farm a mile from the town, taking the family prisoners. From them Clark learned that some days before the townspeople had been alarmed at the rumor of a possible attack, but that their suspicions had been lulled; and that Rocheblave, the creole commandant, was sincerely attached to the British interest, and had under his orders two or three times as many men as Clark.

Getting boats, the American leader ferried his men across the stream under cover of the darkness, and, approaching Kaskaskia, he divided his force into two divisions, one being spread out to surround the town, while he himself led the other up to the walls of the fort.

Inside the fort the lights were lit, and through the windows came the sounds of violins. The officers of the post had given a ball, and the mirth-loving creoles, young men and girls, were dancing and reveling within, and the sentinels had left their posts. One of his captives showed Clark a postern-gate by the river side, and through this he entered the fort, having placed his men round about the entrance. Advancing to the great hall where the revel was held, he leaned silently with folded arms against the doorpost, looking at the dancers. An Indian, lying on the floor of

the entry, gazed intently on the stranger's face as the light from the torches within flickered across it, and suddenly sprang to his feet uttering the unearthly war-whoop. Instantly the dancing ceased; the women screamed, while the men ran towards the door. But Clark, standing unmoved and with unchanged face, grimly bade them continue their dancing, but to remember that they now danced under Virginia and not Great Britain. At the same time his men burst into the fort and seized the French officers.

Immediately Clark had every street secured, and sent runners through the town ordering the people to keep close to their houses on pain of death; and by daylight he had them all disarmed. The backwoodsmen patrolled the town in little squads; while the French in silent terror cowered within their low-roofed houses. Clark was quite willing that they should fear the worst; and their panic was very great.

Next morning a deputation of the chief men waited upon Clark; and thinking themselves in the hands of mere brutal barbarians, all they dared to do was to beg for their lives, which they did, says Clark, "with the greatest servancy [saying] they were willing to be slaves to save their families," though the bolder spirits could not refrain from cursing their fortune that they had not been warned in time to defend themselves. Clark knew it was hopeless to expect his little band permanently to hold down a much more numerous hostile population that was closely allied to many surrounding tribes of warlike Indians; he wished above

all things to convert the inhabitants into ardent adherents of the American Government. So he explained at length that, though the Americans came as conquerors, yet it was ever their principle to free, not to enslave the people with whom they came in contact. If the French chose to become loyal citizens and to take the oath of fidelity to the Republic, they should be welcomed to all the privileges of Americans; those who did not so choose should be allowed to depart in peace with their families.

The listeners passed rapidly from the depth of despair to the height of joy; while the crowning touch to their happiness was given when Clark, in answer to a question as to whether the Catholic church could be opened, said that an American commander had nothing to do with any church save to defend it from insult, and that by the laws of the Republic his religion had as great privileges as any other. The priest, a man of ability and influence, became thenceforth a devoted and effective champion of the American cause. The only person whom Clark treated harshly was M. Rocheblave, the commandant, who, when asked to dinner, responded in very insulting terms. Thereupon Clark promptly sent him as a prisoner to Virginia, and sold his slaves for five hundred pounds, a sum which was distributed among the troops as prize-money.

A small detachment of the Americans, accompanied by a volunteer company of French militia, at once marched rapidly on Cahokia. The account of what had happened in Kaskaskia, the news of the alliance

between France and America, and the enthusiastic advocacy of Clark's new friends, soon converted Cahokia; and all its inhabitants, like those of Kaskaskia, took the oath of allegiance to America. Almost at the same time the priest, Gibault, volunteered to go, with a few of his compatriots, to Vincennes, and there endeavor to get the people to join the Americans, as being their natural friends and allies. He started on his mission at once, and on the first of August returned to Clark with the news that he had been completely successful, that the entire population, after having gathered in the church to hear him, had taken the oath of allegiance, and that the American flag floated over their fort. No garrison could be spared to go to Vincennes; so one of the captains was sent thither alone to take command.

Clark now found himself in a position of the utmost difficulty. With a handful of backwoodsmen, imperfectly disciplined, he had to protect and govern a region as large as a European kingdom; he had to keep content and loyal a population alien in race, creed, and language, while he held his own against the British and against the numerous tribes of Indians. He was hundreds of miles from the nearest post containing any American troops; he was still farther from the seat of government. Indeed, Clark himself had not at first appreciated all the dangers as well as possibilities that lay within his conquest; but he was fully alive to them now and saw that, provided he could hold on to it, he had added a vast and fertile territory to the domain of the Union.

The time of service of his troops had expired, and they were anxious to go home. By presents and promises he managed to reënlist one hundred of them for eight months longer, and then, finding that many of the more adventurous young natives were anxious to take service, he enlisted enough of them to fill up all four companies to their original strength. His whole leisure was spent in drilling the men, Americans and French alike, and in a short time he turned them into as orderly and well-disciplined a body as could be found in any garrison of regulars.

He also established very friendly relations with the Spanish captains of the scattered villages across the Mississippi; for the Spaniards were very hostile to the British, and had not yet begun to realize that they had even more to dread from the Americans.

Clark took upon himself the greater task of dealing with a huge horde of savages, representing every tribe between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, who had come to the Illinois, some from a distance of five hundred miles, to learn accurately all that had happened and to hear for themselves what the Long Knives had to say. He met them at Cahokia, chiefs and warriors of every grade, dark-browed, sullen-looking savages, grotesque in look and terrible in possibility. But fortunately Clark understood their natures, and was always on his guard.

For the first two or three days no conclusion was reached, though there was plenty of speech-making. But on the night of the third a party of turbulent warriors

endeavored to force their way into the house where he was lodging and to carry him off. Clark, being "under some apprehension among such a number of Devils," was anticipating treachery, and promptly seized the savages; while the townspeople took the alarm and were quickly under arms, thus convincing the Indians that their friendship for the Americans was not feigned.

Clark instantly put the captives, both chiefs and warriors, in irons. He had treated the Indians well, but he knew that any sign of timidity would be fatal. The crestfallen prisoners humbly protested that they were only trying to find out if the French were really friendly to Clark, and begged that they might be released. He with haughty indifference refused to release them, even when the chiefs of the other tribes came up to intercede. He continued wholly unmoved, and did not even shift his lodgings to the fort, remaining in a house in the town; but he kept the guard ready for instant action. To make his show of indifference complete, he "assembled a Number of Gentlemen and Ladies and danced nearly the whole Night."

Next morning he summoned all the tribes to a grand council, releasing the captive chiefs that he might speak to them in the presence of their friends and allies. The preliminary ceremonies were carefully executed in accordance with the rigid Indian etiquette. Then Clark, standing up in the midst of the rings of squatted warriors, with his riflemen clustered behind him, produced the bloody war-belt of wampum, and handed it to the chiefs whom he had taken captive,

telling the assembled tribes that he scorned alike their treachery and their hostility; that he would be thoroughly justified in putting them to death, but that instead he would have them escorted safely from the town, and after three days would begin war upon them. He warned them that, if they did not wish their own women and children massacred, they must stop killing those of the Americans. Pointing to the war-belt, he challenged them, on behalf of his people, to see which would make it the most bloody; and he finished by telling them that while they stayed in his camp they should be given food and strong drink, but that now he had ended his talk to them and he wished them speedily to depart.

Not only the prisoners, but all the other chiefs in turn forthwith rose, and in language of dignified submission protested their regret at having been led astray by the British, and their determination thenceforth to be friendly with the Americans.

In response Clark again told them that he came not as a counselor but as a warrior, not begging for a truce but carrying in his right hand peace and in his left hand war; save only that to a few of their worst men he intended to grant no terms whatever. To those who were friendly he, too, would be a friend, but if they chose war, he would call from the Thirteen Council Fires warriors so numerous that they would darken the land, and from that time on the red people would hear no sound but that of the birds that lived on blood. He went on to tell them that there had been a mist



before their eyes, but he would clear away the cloud and would show them the right of the quarrel between the Long Knives and the king who dwelt across the great sea; and then he told them about the revolt in terms which would almost have applied to a rising of Hurons or Wyandots against the Iroquois. At the end of his speech he offered them the two belts of peace and war.

They eagerly took the peace belt, but he declined to smoke the calumet, and told them he would not enter into the solemn ceremonies of the peace treaty with them until the following day. He likewise declined to release all his prisoners, and insisted that two of them should be put to death. They even yielded to this, and surrendered to him two young men, who advanced and sat down before him on the floor, covering their heads with their blankets, to receive the tomahawk. Then he granted them full peace, forgave the young men, and the next day, after the peace council, held a feast. The friendship of the Indians was won. Clark ever after had great influence over them; they admired his personal prowess, his oratory, his address as a treaty-maker, and the skill with which he led his troops.

After this treaty there was peace in the Illinois country; the Indians remained for some time friendly, and the French were kept well satisfied.

## CHAPTER IX

### CLARK'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST VINCENNES, 1779

**H**AMILTON, at Detroit, had been so encouraged by the successes of his earlier war parties that, in 1778, he began to plan an attack on Fort Pitt; but his plans were forestalled by Clark's movements, and he abandoned them when the astounding news reached him that the rebels had themselves invaded the Illinois country, captured the British commandant Rocheblave, and that Vincennes likewise was in the hands of the Americans.

He was a man of great energy, and immediately began to prepare an expedition for the reconquest of the country. While emissaries were sent to the Wabash to stir up the Indians against the Americans, every soul in Detroit was busy from morning till night in mending boats, baking biscuit, packing provisions in kegs and bags, preparing artillery stores, and in every way making ready for the expedition. Cattle and wheels were sent ahead to the most important portages on the route; a six-pounder gun was also forwarded. Feasts were held with the Indians, at which oxen were roasted whole, while Hamilton and the chiefs of the French Rangers sang the war-song in solemn council

and received pledges of armed assistance and support from the savages.

On October 7th the expedition, one hundred and seventy-seven strong, left Detroit under the personal command of Hamilton himself, who was joined by so many bands of Indians on the route that when he reached Vincennes his entire force amounted to five hundred men.

Hamilton led his forces across Lake Erie, up the Maumee, and by a nine-mile carry reached one of the sources of the Wabash. But it proved as difficult to go down the Wabash as to get up the Maumee. The water was shallow, and once or twice dykes had to be built that the boats might be floated across. Frost set in heavily, and the ice cut the men as they worked in the water to haul the boats over shoals or rocks. Moreover, at every Indian village it was necessary to stop, hold a conference, and give presents. At last the Wea village was reached, where the Wabash chiefs, who had made peace with the Americans, promptly tendered their allegiance to the British, and handed over a lieutenant and three men of the Vincennes militia, who had been sent out by Captain Leonard Helm, then commandant at Vincennes, on a scouting expedition.

From this village an advance guard, under Major Hay, was sent forward to take possession of Vincennes, but Helm showed so good a front that nothing was attempted until the next day, the 17th of December, when Hamilton came up with his whole force and

entered the town. Poor Helm had been promptly deserted by all the creole militia; for, loud as had been their boasts, at sight of the redcoats they slipped away to the British to surrender their arms. Finally, left with only two Americans, he was obliged to surrender, with no terms granted save that he and his associates should be treated with humanity.

The French inhabitants had shown pretty clearly that they did not take a keen interest in the struggle on either side. They were now summoned to the church and offered the chance—which they for the most part eagerly embraced—of purging themselves of their past misconduct by taking a most humiliating oath of repentance. To keep them in good order Hamilton confiscated all their spirituous liquors, and in a rather amusing burst of Puritan feeling destroyed two billard tables, which he announced were “sources of immorality and dissipation in such a settlement.”

It had been Hamilton's original plan to proceed immediately against Clark at Kaskaskia and complete the reconquest of the Illinois country. He had five hundred men and Clark but little over one hundred. He was not only far nearer his base of supplies and reinforcements at Detroit, than Clark was to his at Fort Pitt, but he was also actually across Clark's line of communications. But the way was long and the country flooded, and he feared the journey might occupy so much time that his stock of provisions would be exhausted. So having decided to suspend active operations during the cold weather, he allowed the Indians

to scatter back to their villages, and sent most of the Detroit militia home, retaining in garrison eighty or ninety whites, and a probably larger number of red auxiliaries. Meanwhile Hamilton planned a formidable campaign for the spring, taking measures to rouse the Indians in the south as well as in the north. He himself was to be joined by reinforcements from Detroit while the Indians were to gather round him as soon as the winter broke. He rightly judged that with this force of quite a thousand men he could not only reconquer the Illinois, but also sweep Kentucky, where the outnumbered riflemen could not meet him in the field, nor the wooden forts have withstood his artillery.

When the news of the loss of Vincennes reached the Illinois towns, and especially when there followed a rumor that Hamilton himself was on his march thither to attack them, the panic became tremendous among the French. They frankly announced that though they much preferred the Americans, yet it would be folly to oppose armed resistance to the British; and one or two of their number were found to be in communication with Hamilton and the Detroit authorities.

In the midst of Clark's doubt and uncertainty, Francis Vigo, a trader in St. Louis, crossed thence to Kaskaskia, on being released from prison at Vincennes, and told Clark that Hamilton had at the time only eighty men in garrison, with three pieces of cannon and some swivels mounted, but that as soon as the winter broke, he intended to gather a very large force and take the offensive.

Clark instantly decided to forestall his foe, and to make the attack himself, heedless of the almost impassable nature of the ground and of the icy severity of the weather. He first equipped a row-galley with two four-pounders and four swivels, and sent her off with a crew of forty men, having named her the *Willing*. She was to patrol the Ohio, and then to station herself in the Wabash so as to stop all boats from descending it.

Then he hastily drew together his little garrisons of backwoodsmen from the French towns, and prepared for the march overland against Vincennes. His bold front and confident bearing, and the prompt decision of his measures, had once more restored confidence among the French, and he was especially helped by the creole girls, whose enthusiasm for the expedition roused many of the daring young men to volunteer under Clark's banner. By these means he gathered together a band of one hundred and seventy men, at whose head he marched out of Kaskaskia on the 7th of February. All the inhabitants escorted them out of the village, and the Jesuit priest, Gibault, gave them absolution at parting.

The route by which they had to go was two hundred and forty miles in length. The weather had grown mild, so that there was no suffering from cold; but in the thaw the ice on the rivers melted, great freshets followed, and all the lowlands and meadows were flooded. They had no tents; but at nightfall they kindled huge camp-fires, and spent the evenings merrily round the piles of blazing logs, in hunter fashion,

feasting on bear's ham and buffalo hump, elk saddle, venison haunch, and the breast of the wild turkey, some singing of love and the chase and war, and others dancing after the manner of the French trappers and wood-runners. Thus they kept on, marching hard and in good spirits until after a week they came to the two branches of the Little Wabash. Their channels were a league apart, but the flood was so high that they now made one great river five miles in width, the overflow of water being three feet deep in the shallowest part of the plains between and alongside them.

Clark, having built a pirogue and crossed the first channel, put up a scaffold on the first edge of the flooded plain. When he had ferried his men over, and brought the baggage across and had placed it on the scaffold, he swam the pack-horses over. Then he loaded the pack-horses as they stood belly-deep in the water beside the scaffold, and marched his men on through the water until they came to the second channel, which was crossed as the first had been. The floods had driven the game all away; so that they soon began to feel hunger, while their progress was very slow, and they suffered much from the fatigue of traveling all day long through deep mud or breast-high water.

On the 17th they reached the Embarras River, but could not cross, nor could they find a dry spot on which to camp; but on a small, almost submerged hillock, they huddled through the night. At daybreak they heard Hamilton's morning gun from the fort, that











was but three leagues distant; and as they could not find a ford across the Embarras, they followed it down and camped by the Wabash. There Clark set his drenched, hungry, and dispirited followers to building some pirogues, which were nearly finished on the morning of the 20th. About noon of the same day a small boat with five Frenchmen from Vincennes was captured, from whom Clark gleaned the welcome intelligence that the condition of affairs was unchanged at the fort, and that there was no suspicion of any impending danger.

By dawn of the next day Clark began to ferry the troops over the Wabash, hoping to get to town by nightfall; but there was no dry land for leagues round about, save where a few hillocks rose island-like above the flood. The men pushed on with infinite toil for about three miles, the water often up to their chins, and camped on a hillock for the night. Clark kept the troops cheered up by every possible means, and records that he was much assisted by "a little antic drummer," a young boy who did good service by making the men laugh with his pranks and jokes.

Next morning they resumed their march, the strongest wading painfully through the water, while the weak and famished were carried in the canoes, which were so hampered by the bushes that they could hardly go even as fast as the toiling footmen. The evening and morning guns of the fort had been heard plainly by the men as they plodded onward. Once they came to a place so deep that there seemed no crossing, but Clark

suddenly blackened his face with gunpowder, gave the war-whoop, and sprang forwards boldly into the ice-cold water; and the men followed him, one after another, without a word. Then he ordered those nearest him to begin one of their favorite songs; and soon the whole line took it up, and marched cheerfully onward. He intended to have the canoes ferry them over the deepest part, but before they came to it one of the men felt that his feet were in a path, and by carefully following it they got to a sugar camp, where they camped for the night, still six miles from the town, without food, and drenched through.

That night was bitterly cold, for there was a heavy frost, and the ice formed half an inch thick round the edges and in the smooth water. But the sun rose bright and glorious, and Clark, in burning words, told his stiffened, famished, half-frozen followers that the evening would surely see them at the goal of their hopes. Without waiting for an answer, he plunged into the water, and they followed him with a cheer. But before the third man had entered the water, he halted and told one of his officers to close the rear with twenty-five men, and to put to death any man who refused to march; and the whole line cheered him again.

Before them lay a broad sheet of water, covering what was known as the Horse Shoe Plain; the floods had made it a shallow lake four miles across, unbroken by so much as a handsbreadth of dry land. On its farther side was a dense wood. Clark led breast-high in the water with fifteen or twenty of the strongest

men next him. About the middle of the plain the cold and exhaustion told so on the weaker men that the little dug-outs plied frantically to and fro to save the more helpless from drowning. Those, who, though weak, could still move onwards, clung to the stronger, and struggled ahead. When they at last reached the woods, the water became so deep that it was to the shoulders of the tallest; but the weak and those of low stature could now cling to the bushes and old logs, until the canoes were able to ferry them to a spot of dry land. Many on reaching the shore fell flat on their faces, and could not move farther.

Fortunately at this time an Indian canoe, paddled by some squaws, was discovered and overtaken by one of the dug-outs. In it was half a quarter of a buffalo, with some corn, tallow, and kettles, an invaluable prize. Broth was immediately made, and was served out with great care; almost all of the men got some, but very many gave their shares to the weakly, rallying them and joking them to put them in good heart. The little refreshment, together with the fires and the bright weather, gave new life to all. They set out again in the afternoon, crossed a deep, narrow lake in their canoes, and after marching a short distance came to a copse of timber from which they saw the fort and town not two miles away. Here they halted and looked to their rifles and ammunition, making ready for the fight. Every man now feasted his eyes with the sight of what he had so long labored to reach, and forthwith forgot that he had suffered anything, making

light of what had been gone through, and passing from dogged despair to the most exultant self-confidence.

After considering some further information, gained from a townsman captured at this point, Clark decided on the hazardous course of announcing his approach. So releasing the prisoner he sent him ahead with a letter to the people of Vincennes, in which he proclaimed to the French that he was that moment about to attack the town; that those townspeople who were friends to the Americans were to remain in their houses, where they would not be molested; that the friends of the king should repair to the fort, join the "hair-buyer general," and fight like men; and that those who did neither of these two things, but remained armed and in the streets, must expect to be treated as enemies. The creoles in the town, when Clark's proclamation was read to them, gathered eagerly to discuss it; but so great was the terror of his name, and so impressed and appalled were they by the mysterious approach of an unknown army, and the confident and menacing language with which its coming was heralded, that none of them dared show themselves partisans of the British by giving warning to the garrison. The Indians likewise heard vague rumors of what had occurred and left the town; a number of the inhabitants who were favorable to the British followed the same course. Hamilton, attracted by the commotion, sent down his soldiers to find out what had occurred; but before they succeeded, the Americans were upon them.

Just when the gathering dusk prevented any dis-

covery of his real numbers, Clark entered the town, and detaching fifty men to guard against the return of a scouting party that had been sent out, he attacked the fort with the rest. A few of the young creoles of the town were allowed to join in the attack, it being deemed good policy to commit them definitely to the American side; while others rendered much assistance, especially by supplying ammunition to Clark's scanty store. Firing was kept up with very little intermission throughout the night. At one o'clock the moon set, and Clark took advantage of the darkness to throw up an entrenchment, from behind which at sunrise on the 24th the riflemen opened a hot fire into the port-holes of the strongest battery, and speedily silenced both its guns. The artillery and musketry of the defenders did very little damage to the assailants, who lost but one man wounded. In return, the backwoodsmen, by firing into the ports, soon rendered it impossible for the guns to be run out and served, and killed or severely wounded six or eight of the garrison.

Early in the forenoon Clark summoned the fort to surrender, and while waiting for the return of the flag he gave his men the opportunity of getting breakfast, the first regular meal they had had for six days. Hamilton's counter-proposal of a three-days' truce Clark instantly rejected and ordered the firing to begin again. While the negotiations were going on a party of Hamilton's Indians returned from a successful scalping expedition against the frontier, and being ignorant of what had taken place marched straight into the



town. Some of Clark's backwoodsmen instantly fell on them and killed or captured nine, besides two French partisans who had been out with them. One of the latter, the son of a creole lieutenant in Clark's troops, after much pleading by his father and friends, procured the release of himself and his comrade. But Clark determined to make a signal example of the six captured Indians, both to strike terror into the rest and to show them how powerless the British were to protect them; so he had them led within sight of the fort and there tomahawked and thrown into the river.

In the afternoon Hamilton sent out another flag, and he and Clark met in the old French church to arrange for the capitulation. It was finally agreed that the garrison, seventy-nine men in all, should surrender as prisoners of war "to a set of uncivilized Virginia woodsmen armed with rifles," as the British commander has left it recorded. In truth, it was a most notable achievement. Clark had taken, without artillery, a heavy stockade, protected by cannon and swivels, and garrisoned by trained soldiers. His superiority in numbers was very far from being in itself sufficient to bring about the result, as witness the almost invariable success with which the similar but smaller Kentucky forts, unprovided with artillery and held by fewer men, were defended against much larger forces than Clark's. Much credit belongs to Clark's men, but most belongs to their leader. The boldness of his plan and the resolute skill with which he followed it out combined to

make his feat the most memorable of all the deeds done west of the Alleghanies in the Revolutionary War.

Immediately after taking the fort Clark sent Helm and fifty men, in boats armed with swivels, up the Wabash to intercept a party of forty French volunteers from Detroit, who were bringing to Vincennes bateaux heavily laden with goods of all kinds, to the value of ten thousand pounds sterling. In a few days Helm returned successful, and the spoils, together with the goods taken at Vincennes, were distributed among the soldiers, who "got almost rich." The gunboat *Willing* appeared shortly after the taking of the fort, the crew bitterly disappointed that they were not in time for the fighting. The long-looked-for messenger from the governor of Virginia also arrived, bearing to the soldiers the warm thanks of the legislature of that State for their capture of Kaskaskia and the promise of more substantial reward.

Clark was forced to parole most of his prisoners, but twenty-seven, including Hamilton himself, were sent to Virginia. The backwoodsmen regarded Hamilton with revengeful hatred, and he was not well treated while among them, save only by Boone—for the kind-hearted, fearless old pioneer never felt anything but pity for a fallen enemy.

Clark soon received some small reinforcements, and was able to establish permanent garrisons at Vincennes, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia. With the Indian tribes who lived round about he made firm peace; against some hunting bands of Delawares, who came in and began

to commit ravages, he waged ruthless and untiring war. His own men worshipped him; the French loved and stood in awe of him, while the Indians respected and feared him greatly. During the remainder of the Revolutionary war the British were not able to make any serious effort to shake the hold he had given the Americans on the region lying around and between Vincennes and the Illinois. Moreover he so effectually pacified the tribes between the Wabash and the Mississippi that they did not become open and formidable foes of the whites until, with the close of the war against Britain, Kentucky passed out of the stage when Indian hostilities threatened her very life.

Clark himself, towards the end of 1779, took up his abode at the Falls of the Ohio, where he served in some sort as a shield both for the Illinois and for Kentucky. He was ultimately made a brigadier-general of the Virginia militia, and to the harassed settlers in Kentucky his mere name was a tower of strength.

## CHAPTER X

### THE MORAVIAN MASSACRE, 1779-1782

**A**FTER the Moravian Indians were led by their missionary pastors to the banks of the Muskingum they dwelt peacefully and unharmed for several years. In Lord Dunmore's war special care was taken by the white leaders that these Quaker Indians should not be harmed; and their villages of Salem, Gnadenhütten, and Schönbrunn received no damage whatever. During the early years of the Revolutionary struggle they were not molested, but dwelt in peace and comfort in their roomy cabins of squared timbers, cleanly and quiet, industriously tilling the soil, abstaining from all strong drink, schooling their children, and keeping the Seventh Day as a day of rest. They sought to observe strict neutrality, harming neither the Americans nor the Indians, nor yet the allies of the latter, the British and French at Detroit. They hoped thereby to offend neither side, and to escape unhurt themselves.

But this was wholly impossible. They occupied an utterly untenable position. Their villages lay midway between the white settlements southeast of the Ohio, and the towns of the Indians round Sandusky, the

bitterest foes of the Americans, and those most completely under British influence. They were on the trail that the war parties followed, whether they struck at Kentucky or at the valleys of the Alleghany and Monongahela. Consequently the Sandusky Indians used the Moravian villages as half-way houses, at which to halt and refresh themselves whether starting on a foray or returning with scalps and plunder.

By the time the war had lasted four or five years both the Indians and the backwoodsmen had become fearfully exasperated with the unlucky Moravians. The Sandusky Indians were largely Wyandots, Shawnees, and Delawares, the latter being fellow-tribesmen of the Christian Indians; and so they regarded the Moravians as traitors to the cause of their kinsfolk, because they would not take up the hatchet against the whites. The British at Detroit feared lest the Americans might use the Moravian villages as a basis from which to attack the lake posts; they also coveted their men as allies; and so the baser among their officers urged the Sandusky tribes to break up the villages and drive off the missionaries. The other Indian tribes likewise regarded them with angry contempt and hostility; the Iroquois once sent word to the Chippewas and Ottawas that they gave them the Christian Indians "to make broth of."

The Americans became even more exasperated. The war parties that plundered and destroyed their homes got shelter and refreshment from the Moravians,—who, indeed, dared not refuse it. The backwoodsmen could

not or would not see that this help was given with the utmost reluctance. Soon the frontiersmen began to clamor for the destruction of the Moravian towns; yet for a little while they were restrained by the Continental officers of the few border forts, who always treated these harmless Indians, with the utmost kindness.

The first blow the Moravians received was from the wild Indians. In the fall of this same year (1781) their towns were suddenly visited by a horde of armed warriors, horsemen, and footmen, from Sandusky and Detroit. These warriors insisted on the Christian Indians abandoning their villages and accompanying them back to Sandusky and Detroit; and they destroyed many of the houses, and much of the food for the men and the fodder for the horses and cattle. The Moravians begged humbly to be left where they were, but without avail. They were forced away to Lake Erie, the missionaries being taken to Detroit, while the Indians were left in great want on the plains of Sandusky. Many of them gradually made their way back to their desolate homes.

A few Moravians had escaped, and remained in their villages; but these were soon captured by a small detachment of American militia, under Col. David Williamson, and were brought to Fort Pitt, where the Continental commander, Col. John Gibson, at once released them, and sent them back to the villages unharmed. Gibson had all along been a firm friend of the Moravians. He had protected them against the

violence of the borderers, and had written repeated and urgent letters to Congress and to his superior officers, asking that some steps might be taken to protect them.

The very day after Gibson sent the Christian Indians back to their homes, several murders were committed near Pittsburg, and many of the frontiersmen insisted that they were done with the good will or connivance of the Moravians. The settlements had suffered greatly all summer long, and the people clamored savagely against all the Indians, blaming both Gibson and Williamson for not having killed or kept captive their prisoners. The ruffianly and vicious of course clamored louder than any; the mass of people who are always led by others, chimed in, in a somewhat lower key; and many good men were silent. Williamson was physically a fairly brave officer and not naturally cruel; but he was weak and ambitious, ready to yield to any popular demand, and, if it would advance his own interests, to connive at any act of barbarity. Gibson, however, who was a very different man, paid no heed to the cry raised against him.

In 1782 the Indian outrages on the frontiers began very early. In February several families of settlers were butchered, some under circumstances of peculiar atrocity. In particular, four Sandusky Indians, having taken some prisoners, impaled two of them, a woman and a child, while on their way to the Moravian towns, where they rested and ate, prior to continuing their journey with their remaining captives. When they

left they warned the Moravians that white men were on their trail. A white man who had just escaped this same impaling party, also warned the Moravians that the exasperated borderers were preparing a party to kill them; and Gibson, from Fort Pitt, sent a messenger to them, who, however, arrived too late. But the poor Christian Indians showed a curious apathy; their senses were numbed and dulled by their misfortunes, and they quietly awaited their doom.

It was not long deferred. Eighty or ninety frontiersmen, under Williamson, hastily gathered together to destroy the Moravian towns. It was, of course, just such an expedition as most attracted the brutal, the vicious, and the ruffianly; but a few decent men, to their shame, went along. They started in March, and on the third day reached the fated villages. That no circumstance might be wanting to fill the measure of their infamy, they spoke the Indians fair, assured them that they meant well, and spent an hour or two in gathering together those who were in Salem and Gnadenhütten, putting them all in two houses at the latter place. Those at the third town of Schönbrunn got warning and made their escape.

As soon as the unsuspecting Indians were gathered in the two houses, the men in one, the women and children in the other, the whites held a council as to what should be done with them. The great majority were for putting them instantly to death. Eighteen men protested, and asked that the lives of the poor creatures should be spared, and then withdrew, calling



God to witness that they were innocent of the crime about to be committed. By rights they should have protected the victims at any hazard. One of them took off with him a small Indian boy, whose life was thus spared. With this exception only two lads escaped.

When the murderers told the doomed Moravians their fate, they merely requested a short delay in which to prepare themselves for death. They asked one another's pardon for whatever wrongs they might have done, knelt down and prayed, kissed one another farewell, "and began to sing hymns of hope and of praise to the Most High." Then the white butchers entered the houses and put to death the ninety-six men, women, and children that were within their walls.

When the full particulars of the affair were known, all the best leaders of the border, almost all the most famous Indian fighters, joined in denouncing it. Nor is it right that the whole of the frontier folk should bear the blame for the deed. It is a fact, honorable and worthy of mention, that the Kentuckians were never implicated in this or any similar massacre. But at the time, and in their own neighborhood—the corner of the Upper Ohio valley where Pennsylvania and Virginia touch—the conduct of the murderers of the Moravians aroused no condemnation.

In May a body of four hundred and eighty Pennsylvania and Virginia militia gathered at Mingo Bottom, on the Ohio, with the purpose of marching against and destroying the towns of the hostile Wyandots and Delawares in the neighborhood of the Sandusky River.

The Sandusky Indians were those whose attacks were most severely felt by that portion of the frontier; and for their repeated and merciless ravages they deserved the severest chastisement.

The expedition against them was from every point of view just; and it was undertaken to punish them, and without any definite idea of attacking the remnant of the Moravians who were settled among them. On the other hand, the militia included in their ranks most of those who had taken part in the murderous expedition of two months before. How little the militia volunteers disapproved of the Moravian massacre was shown when, as was the custom, they met to choose a leader; for Williamson, who commanded at the massacre, was beaten by only five votes, his successful opponent being Colonel William Crawford.

After nine days' steady marching through the unbroken forests they came out on the Sandusky plains, billowy stretches of prairie covered with high coarse grass and dotted with islands of timber. Crawford hoped to surprise the Indian towns; but his progress was slow and the militia every now and then fired off their guns. The savages dogged his march and knew all his movements, and obtained from Detroit a number of lake Indians and a body of rangers and Canadian volunteers, under Captain Caldwell, as a reinforcement.

On the fourth of June Crawford's troops reached one of the Wyandot towns. Finding this to be deserted, the army marched on, and late in the afternoon en-

countered Caldwell and his Detroit rangers, together with about two hundred Delawares, Wyandots, and lake Indians, posted in a grove. A hot skirmish ensued, in which, in spite of Crawford's superiority in force, and of the exceptionally favorable nature of the country, he failed to gain any marked advantage. His troops, containing so large a leaven of the murderers of the Moravians, certainly showed small fighting capacity when matched against armed men who could defend themselves. After the first few minutes neither side gained or lost ground.

That night Crawford's men slept by their watch-fires in the grove that was won in the first rush, their foes camping round about in the open prairie. Next morning the British and Indians were not inclined to renew the attack, wishing to wait until further reinforcements should arrive. The only chance for the American militia was to crush their enemies instantly; yet they lay idle all day long, save for an occasional harmless skirmish. Crawford's generalship was as poor as the soldiership of his men.

In the afternoon the Indians were joined by one hundred and forty Shawnees. At sight of this accession of strength the dispirited militia gave up all thought of anything but flight, though they were still equal in numbers to their foes. That night they began a hurried and disorderly retreat. The Shawnees and Delawares attacked them in the darkness, causing some loss and great confusion, and a few of the troops got into the marsh. As Crawford was among the

missing, Williamson took command, and hastily continued the retreat. The savages, however, did not make a very hot pursuit; so the defeated Americans reached Mingo Bottom on the 13th of the month with little further loss. Many of the stragglers came in afterwards. In all about seventy either died of their wounds, were killed outright, or were captured. Among the latter was Crawford himself, who had become separated from the main body when it began its disorderly night retreat. After abandoning his jaded horse he started homewards on foot, but fell into the hands of a small party of Delawares, together with a companion named Knight.

Crawford was burned alive at the stake; but Knight escaped from his captor while being taken to a neighboring village to be burned. For the Indians were fearfully exasperated by the Moravian massacre; and some of the former Moravians, who had joined their wild tribesmen, told the prisoners that from that time on not a single captive should escape torture.

Slover, another captive, was taken round to various Indian villages and saw a number of his companions tomahawked or tortured to death. At last he too was condemned to be burned, and was actually tied to the stake. But a heavy shower came on, so wetting the wood that it was determined to reprieve him till the morrow.

That night he was bound and put in a wigwam under the care of three warriors. They laughed and chatted with the prisoner, mocking him, and describing to him

with relish all the torments that he was to suffer. At last they fell asleep, and just before daybreak he managed to slip out of his rope and escape, entirely naked.

Catching a horse, he galloped at speed for seventy miles, until his horse dropped dead under him late in the afternoon. Continuing the race on foot, at last he halted, sick and weary; but hearing afar off the halloo of his pursuers, he ran until after dark. He then snatched a few hours' restless sleep; but as soon as the moon rose he renewed his run for life, until at last he distanced his enemies, and, naked, bruised, and torn, on the morning of the sixth day he reached Wheeling.

Until near the close of the year 1782 the settlements along the upper Ohio suffered heavily, a deserved retribution for failing to punish the dastardly deed of Williamson and his associates.

## CHAPTER XI

KENTUCKY UNTIL THE END OF THE REVOLUTION,  
1782-1783

**S**EVENTEEN hundred and eighty-two proved to be the year of blood for Kentucky also. The British at Detroit had strained every nerve to drag into the war the entire Indian population of the Northwest, and had finally succeeded in arousing even the most distant tribes. So, early in the spring, the Indians renewed their forays; horses were stolen, cabins burned, and women and children carried off captive. The people were confined closely to their stockaded forts, from which small bands of riflemen sallied to patrol the country.

In March a party of twenty-five Wyandots came into the settlements, passed Boonsborough, and killed and scalped a girl within sight of Estill's Station. The men from the latter, also to the number of twenty-five, hastily gathered under Captain Estill, and after two days' hot pursuit overtook the Wyandots. A fair stand-up fight followed, the better marksmanship of the whites being offset, as so often before, by the superiority their foes showed in sheltering themselves. At last Estill despatched a lieutenant and seven men to

get round the Wyandots and assail them in the rear; but either the lieutenant's heart or his judgment failed him; he took too long; for meanwhile the Wyandots closed in on the others, killing nine, including Estill, and wounding four, who, with their unhurt comrades, escaped.

Various ravages and skirmishes were but the prelude to a far more serious attack. In July the British captains Caldwell and McKee came down from Detroit with a party of rangers and an army of over a thousand Indians—the largest body of either red men or white that was mustered west of the Alleghanies during the Revolution. They meant to strike at Wheeling; but, alarmed by the rumor that Clark intended to attack the Shawnee towns, they turned back only to find that the alarm had been groundless. Most of the savages, with characteristic fickleness of temper, then declined to go farther; but with a body of over three hundred Hurons and lake Indians, and with their Detroit rangers, Caldwell and McKee crossed into Kentucky to attack the small forts of Fayette County. The best-defended and most central of these was Lexington, round which were grouped the other four—Bryan's (which was the largest), McGee's, McConnell's, and Boone's (not Boonsborough).

The attack was made on Bryan's Station early on the morning of the 16th of August. Some of the settlers were in the cornfields, and the rest inside the palisade of standing logs; they were preparing to follow a band of marauders which had gone south of the Kentucky.

Like so many other stations, Bryan's had no spring within its walls; and as soon as a few outlying scouts of the approaching party were discovered and an attack was to be feared, it became a matter of vital importance to lay in a supply of water. It was feared that to send the men to the spring would arouse suspicion in the minds of the hiding savages; and, accordingly, the women went down with their pails and buckets as usual. The younger girls showed some nervousness, but the old housewives marshalled them as coolly as possible, talking and laughing together, and by their unconcern completely deceived the few Indians who were lurking near by—for the main body had not yet come up. The savages feared that, if they attacked the women, all chance of surprising the fort would be lost; so the water-carriers were suffered to go back unharmed. Hardly were they within the fort, however, when the Indians found that they had been discovered, and attacked so quickly that they cut off some of the men who had lingered in the cornfields.

At first a few Indians appeared on the side of the Lexington road, where they whooped and danced defiance to the fort. A dozen active young men were sent out to carry on a mock skirmish with the decoy party, while the rest of the defenders gathered behind the wall on the opposite side. As soon as a noisy but harmless skirmish had been begun by the sallying party, the main body of warriors burst out of the woods and rushed towards the western gate. A single volley from the loopholes drove them back, while the sally-



ing party returned at a run and entered the Lexington gate unharmed, laughing at the success of their stratagem.

There had been runners who slipped out of the fort at the first alarm and went straight to Lexington, where they found that the men had just started out to cut off the retreat of some marauding savages. They speedily overtook the troops, and told of the attack on Bryan's. Instantly forty men under Major Levi Todd counter-marched to the rescue, seventeen being mounted and the others on foot. When they approached Bryan's, being fired upon by Indians from an adjoining corn-field, Todd and the horsemen, galloping hard through the dust and smoke, reached the fort in safety. The footmen were quickly forced to retreat towards Lexington.

That night the Indians tried to burn the fort, shooting flaming arrows onto the roofs of the cabins and rushing up to the wooden wall with lighted torches. But when day broke, they realized that it was hopeless to make any further effort and sullenly withdrew during the forenoon, the 17th of August.

All this time the runners sent out from Bryan's had been speeding through the woods, summoning help from each of the little walled towns. The Fayette troops quickly gathered. Boone marched at the head of the men of his station. The men from Lexington, McConnell's and McGee's, rallied under John Todd. Troops also came from south of the Kentucky river; Trigg, McGarry, and Harlan led the men from Harrods-

burg, who were soonest ready to march, and likewise brought the news that Logan was raising the whole force of Lincoln in hot haste, and would follow in a couple of days.

Next morning, after the departure of the Indians, the backwoods horsemen rode swiftly on the trail of their foes, who retreated toward the Blue Licks, and before evening came to where they had camped the night before. A careful examination of the camp-fires convinced the leaders that they were heavily outnumbered. As they reached the Blue Licks the following morning, the 19th of August, they saw a few Indians retreating up a rocky ridge that led from the north bank of the river. The backwoodsmen halted on the south bank, and a short council was held. All turned naturally to Boone, the most experienced Indian fighter present. The wary old pioneer strongly urged that no attack be made at the moment, but that they should await the troops coming up under Logan. The Indians were certainly much superior in numbers; they were aware that they were being followed by a small force, and from the confident, leisurely way in which they had managed their retreat, were undoubtedly anxious to be overtaken and attacked. Todd and Trigg agreed with Boone, and so did many of the cooler riflemen. But the decision was not suffered to rest with the three colonels who nominally commanded. Many of the more headlong and impatient desired instant action; and these found a sudden leader in Major Hugh McGarry, who, greatly angered, did not hesitate to

appeal from the decision of the council. Turning to the crowd of backwoodsmen, he spurred his horse into the stream, waving his hat over his head and calling on all who were not cowards to follow him. In an instant the hunter-soldiers plunged in after him with a shout, and splashed across the ford of the shallow river in huddled confusion.

As the Indians were immediately ahead, the array of battle was at once formed. The right was led by Trigg, the center by Colonel-Commandant Todd in person, with McGarry under him, and an advance guard of twenty-five men under Harlan in front; while the left was under Boone. The ground was equally favorable to both parties, the timber being open and good. But the Indians had the advantage in numbers, and were able to outflank the whites.

In a minute the spies brought word that the enemy were close in front. Whereupon the Kentuckians, in single battle-line, galloped up at speed to within sixty yards of their foes, leaped from their horses, and instantly gave and received a heavy fire. Boone was the first to open the combat; and under his command the left wing pushed the Indians opposite them back for a hundred yards. The old hunter of course led in person; his men stoutly backed him up, and their resolute bearing and skillful marksmanship gave to the whites in this part of the line a momentary victory. But on the right of the advance, affairs went badly from the start. The Indians were thrown out so as to completely surround Trigg's wing. Almost as soon as the firing

became heavy in front, crowds of painted warriors rose from some hollows of long grass that lay on Trigg's right and poured in a close and deadly volley. Rushing forward, they took his men in rear and flank, and rolled them up on the center, killing Trigg himself. Harlan's advance guard was cut down almost to a man, their commander being among the slain. The center was then assailed from both sides by overwhelming numbers. Todd did all he could by voice and example to keep his men firm, and cover Boone's successful advance, but in vain. Riding to and fro on his white horse, he was shot through the body, and mortally wounded. He leaped on his horse again, but his strength failed him; the blood gushed from his mouth; he leaned forward and fell heavily from the saddle. With his death the center gave way; and, of course, Boone and the men of the left wing, thrust in advance, were surrounded on three sides. A wild rout followed, every one pushing in headlong haste for the ford. "He that could remount a horse was well off; he that could not, had no time for delay." The actual fighting had only occupied five minutes.

Among the first to cross was a man named Netherland, whose cautious advice had been laughed at before the battle. No sooner had he reached the south bank, than he reined up his horse and leaped off, calling on his comrades to stop and cover the flight of the others. The ford was choked with a struggling mass of horsemen and footmen, fleeing whites and following Indians. Netherland and his companions opened a brisk fire

upon the latter, forcing them to withdraw for a moment and let the remainder of the fugitives cross in safety. Then the flight began again. The check that had been given the Indians allowed the whites time to recover heart and breath. Retreating in groups or singly through the forest, with their weapons reloaded, their speed of foot and woodcraft enabled such as had crossed the river to escape without further serious loss.

Boone was among the last to leave the field. His son Israel was slain, and he himself was cut off from the river; but turning abruptly to one side, he broke through the ranks of the pursuers, outran them, swam the river, and returned unharmed to Bryan's Station.

The loss to the defeated Kentuckians had been very great. Seventy were killed outright, including Colonel Todd and Lieutenant-Colonel Trigg, the first and third in command. Seven were captured, and twelve of those who escaped were badly wounded. The victors lost one of the Detroit rangers (a Frenchman), and six Indians killed and ten Indians wounded. Almost their whole loss was caused by the successful advance of Boone's troops, save what was due to Netherland when he rallied the flying backwoodsmen at the ford.

Of the seven white captives four were put to death with torture; three eventually rejoined their people. One of them owed his being spared to a singular and amusing feat of strength and daring. When forced to run the gauntlet he, by his activity, actually succeeded in reaching the council-house unharmed; when almost to it, he turned, seized a powerful Indian and hurled

him violently to the ground, and then, thrusting his head between the legs of another pursuer, he tossed him clean over his back, after which he sprang on a log, leaped up and knocked his heels together, crowed in the fashion of backwoods victors, and rallied the Indians as a pack of cowards. One of the old chiefs immediately adopted him into the tribe as his son.

In a day or two Logan came up with four hundred men from south of the Kentucky, tall Simon Kenton marching at the head of the troops, as captain of a company. They buried the bodies of the slain on the battle-field, in long trenches, and heaped over them stones and logs. Meanwhile the victorious Indians, glutted with vengeance, recrossed the Ohio, and vanished into the northern forests.

The Indian ravages continued throughout the early fall months; outlying cabins were destroyed, the settlers were harried from the clearings and a station on Salt River was taken by surprise, thirty-seven people being captured. Stunned by the crushing disaster at the Blue Licks, and utterly disheartened and cast down by the continued ravages, many of the settlers threatened to leave the country. The utmost confusion and discouragement prevailed everywhere.

At last the news of repeated disaster roused Clark to his old-time energy. The pioneers turned with eager relief towards the man who had so often led them to success. They answered his call with quick enthusiasm; supplies were offered in abundance, and all who could shoot and ride met at the mouth of the Licking,

where Clark took supreme command. On the 4th of November, he left the banks of the Ohio and struck off northward through the forest, at the head of one thousand and fifty mounted riflemen. On the 10th he attacked the Miami towns, and burned their cabins, together with an immense quantity of corn and provisions—a severe loss at the opening of winter, and scattered the forces sent from Detroit to help them. To the Indians this was a remarkable display of power, coming so soon after the battle of the Blue Licks, and they never again attempted a serious invasion of Kentucky. Thus ended the year of blood.

At the beginning of 1783, when the news of peace was spread abroad, the inrush of new settlers became enormous, and Kentucky fairly entered on its second stage of growth. The days of the hunters and Indian fighters were over. The three counties were changed into the "District of Kentucky," with a court of common law and chancery jurisdiction. This sat first at Harrodsburg, where a log court-house and a log jail were immediately built. Manufactories of salt were started at the licks, where it was sold at from three to five silver dollars a bushel; large grist-mills were erected at some of the stations; wheat crops were raised; and small distilleries were built. The gigantic system of river commerce had been begun the preceding year by one Jacob Yoder, who loaded a flatboat at the Old Redstone Fort, on the Monongahela, and drifted down to New Orleans, where he sold his goods, and returned to the Falls of the Ohio. Several regular schools were

started, and at Shallowford Station, the sport-loving Kentuckians laid out a race-track.

The first retail store since Henderson's, at Boonsborough, was closed in 1775, was established this year at the Falls; the goods were brought in wagons from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, and thence down the Ohio in flatboats. Clark undertook to supply the inhabitants with meat, employing a hunter named John Saunders, to whom he furnished three men, a pack-horse, salt, and ammunition; while Saunders agreed to be "assiduously industrious" in hunting. Buffalo beef, bear meat, deer hams, and bear oil were the commodities most sought after. The meat was to be properly cured and salted in camp, and sent from time to time to the Falls, where Clark was to dispose of it in market, a third of the price going to Saunders.

Thus the settlers could no longer always kill their own game; and there were churches, schools, mills, stores, race-tracks, and markets in Kentucky.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE WATAUGA COMMONWEALTH, 1769-1774

**T**HE eastern part of what is now Tennessee consists of a great valley, running from northeast to southwest, bounded on one side by the Cumberland, and on the other by the Great Smoky and Unaka Mountains; the latter separating it from North Carolina. In this valley arise and end the numerous streams that combine to make the Tennessee River; and along its whole length ran the great war trail used by the Cherokees and their northern foes. As in western Virginia the first settlers came, for the most part, from Pennsylvania, following these valleys to the southwest; so, in turn, to what is now eastern Tennessee, the first settlers came mainly from Virginia, from this same Pennsylvania stock.

In 1769, the year that Boone first went to Kentucky, the first permanent settlers came to the banks of the Watauga. Two years later one of the new-comers surveyed the Virginia boundry line some distance to the westward, and discovered that the Watauga settlement came within the limits of North Carolina. Hitherto the settlers had supposed that they were governed by the Virginian law, and that their rights as against the

Indians were guaranteed by the Virginian government; but this discovery threw them back upon their own resources.

As North Carolina was always a turbulent and disorderly colony, unable to enforce law and justice even in the long-settled districts, it was wholly out of the question to appeal to her for aid in governing a remote and outlying community. Moreover, about the time that the Watauga commonwealth was founded, the troubles in North Carolina developed into open war between the adherents of the royal governor, Tryon, and the Regulators, as the insurgents styled themselves. As a consequence of these troubles, many people from the back counties of North Carolina crossed the mountains, and took up their abode among the pioneers on the Watauga.

The settlers along the Watauga early in 1772 found themselves obliged to organize a civil government under which they should live. Accordingly they decided to adopt written articles of agreement, by which their conduct should be governed; and these were known as the Articles of the Watauga Association. They formed a written constitution, the first ever adopted west of the mountains. It is this fact of the early independence and self-government of the settlers along the head-waters of the Tennessee that gives to their history its peculiar importance. They were the first men of American birth to establish a free and independent community on the continent.

The next step taken by the Watauga settlers was to

meet in a general convention, akin to the New England town-meeting, and to elect a representative assembly. This consisted of thirteen representatives, who proceeded to elect from their number five to form a committee or court, which should carry on the actual business of government, and should exercise both judicial and executive functions. This court had a clerk and a sheriff to record and enforce its decrees. Their chairman was also chairman of the representative body.

The five commissioners settled all disputes by the decision of a majority; and in dealing with non-residents they made them give bonds to abide by their decision, thus avoiding any necessity of proceeding against their persons. On behalf of the community itself, they were not only permitted to control its internal affairs, but also to secure lands by making treaties with a foreign power, the Indians; a distinct exercise of the right of sovereignty.

They held their sessions at stated and regular times, and took the law of Virginia as their standard for decisions. They saw to the recording of deeds and wills, and carried on a most vigorous warfare against law-breakers, especially horse-thieves. For six years their government continued in full vigor; then, in February, 1778, North Carolina having organized Washington County, which included all of what is now Tennessee, the governor of that State appointed justices of the peace and militia officers for the new county, and the old system came to an end.

In this movement to get a firm government, and in the acts of the community in carrying it on, the names of James Robertson and John Sevier stand forth most prominently. Robertson, a North Carolinian, had come over the mountains in 1771. His energy and natural ability brought him to the front at once, although he had much less than even the average backwoods education. Both he and Sevier were still under thirty years of age. Sevier, who came a year later, like his friend Robertson, entered eagerly into the dangers and difficulties of the pioneers, and quickly began to exercise an almost unbounded influence over the backwoodsmen. This was due largely to his ready tact, invariable courtesy, and generous hospitality. His skill and dashing prowess quickly won for him a place at the head of the county militia, and later made him the most renowned Indian fighter of the Southwest.

Early in 1772 Virginia made a treaty with the Cherokee Nation. Immediately afterwards the agent of the British Government among the Cherokees ordered the Watauga settlers to instantly leave their lands. They refused to move; but feeling the insecurity of their tenure they deputed two commissioners to make a treaty with the Cherokees. This was successfully accomplished, the Indians leasing to the associated settlers all the lands on the Watauga waters for the space of eight years, in consideration of about six thousand dollars' worth of blankets, paint, muskets, and the like.

After the lease was signed a day was appointed on

which to hold a great race, wrestling matches, and other sports, at Watauga. Not only many whites from the various settlements, but also a number of Indians, came to see or take part in the sports; and all went well until the evening, when some lawless men, who had been lurking in the woods round about, killed an Indian, whereat his fellows left the spot in great anger.

The settlers, alarmed at the prospect of an Indian war, were rescued by the daring of Robertson. Leaving the others to build a palisaded fort, Robertson set off alone through the woods and followed the great war trail down to the Cherokee towns. His quiet, resolute fearlessness impressed the savages to whom he went, and helped to save his life; moreover, the Cherokees knew him and trusted his word. His ready tact and knowledge of Indian character did the rest. He persuaded the chiefs and warriors to meet him in council, assured them of the anger and sorrow with which all the Watauga people viewed the murder, which had undoubtedly been committed by some outsider, and wound up by declaring his determination to have the wrong-doer arrested and punished for his crime. The Indians finally consented to pass the affair over and not take vengeance upon innocent men. Then the daring backwoods diplomatist, well pleased with the success of his mission, returned to the anxious little community.

For several years after they made their lease with the Cherokees the men of the Watauga, or, as they

afterwards were called, of the Holston settlements, were not troubled by their Indian neighbors. By degrees they wrought out of the wilderness comfortable homes filled with plenty; and they successfully solved the difficult problem of self-government.

## CHAPTER XIII

### KING'S MOUNTAIN, 1780

**D**URING the Revolutionary War the men of the West for the most part took no share in the actual campaigning against the British and Hessians. Their duty was to conquer and hold the wooded wilderness that stretched westward to the Mississippi; and to lay therein the foundations of many future commonwealths. Yet at a crisis in the great struggle for liberty, at one of the darkest hours for the patriot cause, it was given to a band of western men to come to the relief of their brethren of the seaboard and to strike a telling and decisive blow for all America.

By the end of 1779, the British had reconquered Georgia. In May, 1780, they captured Charleston, speedily reduced all South Carolina to submission, and then marched into the old North State. Cornwallis, much the ablest of the British generals, was in command over a mixed force of British, Hessian, and loyal American regulars, aided by Irish volunteers and bodies of refugees from Florida. In addition, the friends to the King's cause, who were very numerous in the southernmost States, rose at once on the news of the British successes, and thronged to the royal standards;

so that a number of regiments of Tory militia were soon embodied. McGillivray, the Greek chief, sent bands of his warriors to assist the British and Tories on the frontier, and the Cherokees likewise came to their help. The patriots for the moment abandoned hope, and bowed before their victorious foes.

Cornwallis himself led the main army northward against the American forces. Meanwhile he entrusted to two of his most redoubtable officers the task of scouring the country, raising the loyalists, scattering the patriot troops that were still embodied, and finally crushing out all remaining opposition. These two men were Tarleton the dashing cavalryman, and Ferguson the rifleman, the skilled partisan leader.

Patrick Ferguson, the son of Lord Pitfour, was a Scotch soldier, at this time about thirty-six years old, who had been twenty years in the British army. He had served with distinction against the French in Germany, had quelled a Carib uprising in the West Indies, and in 1777 was given the command of a company of riflemen in the army opposed to Washington, playing a good part at Brandywine and Monmouth. He was of middle height and slender build, with a quiet, serious face and a singularly winning manner; and withal, he was of dauntless courage, of hopeful, eager temper, and remarkably fertile in shifts and expedients. He was particularly fond of night attacks, surprises, and swift, sudden movements generally, and was unwearied in drilling and disciplining his men. Not only was he an able leader, but he was also a finished horseman,



and the best marksman with both pistol and rifle in the British army. Moreover, his courtesy stood him in good stead with the people of the country; he was always kind and civil, and would spend hours in talking affairs over with them and pointing out the mischief of rebelling against their lawful sovereign. He soon became a potent force in winning the doubtful to the British side, and exerted a great influence over the Tories; they gathered eagerly to his standard, and he drilled them with patient perseverance.

After the taking of Charleston Ferguson's volunteers and Tarleton's legion, acting separately or together, speedily destroyed the different bodies of patriot soldiers. Their activity and energy was such that the opposing commanders seemed for the time being quite unable to cope with them, and the American detachments were routed and scattered in quick succession. Tarleton did his work with brutal ruthlessness; his men plundered and ravaged, maltreated prisoners, and hung without mercy all who were suspected of turning from the loyalist to the Whig side.

Ferguson, on the contrary, while quite as valiant and successful a commander, showed a generous heart, and treated the inhabitants of the country fairly well. Yet even his tender mercies must have seemed cruel to the Whigs, as may be judged by the following extract from a diary kept by one of his lieutenants: "This day Col. Ferguson got the rear guard in order to do his King and country justice, by protecting friends and widows, and destroying rebel property; also to









collect live stock for the use of the army. All of which we effect as we go by destroying furniture, breaking windows, etc., taking all their horned cattle, horses, mules, sheep, etc., and their negroes to drive them."

Ferguson, having reduced South Carolina to submission, pushed his victories to the foot of the Smoky and the Yellow Mountains. Here he learned that some of these mountaineers had already borne arms against him, and were now harboring men who had fled before his advance. By a prisoner he at once sent them warning to cease their hostilities, and threatened that if they did not desist he would march across the mountains, hang their leaders, put their fighting men to the sword, and waste their settlements with fire.

When the Holston men learned of Ferguson's threats, they did not wait for his attack, but sallied from their strongholds to meet him. Hitherto the war with the British had been something afar off; now it had come to their thresholds and their spirits rose to the danger.

At the Sycamore Shoals of the Watauga, the riflemen gathered on the 25th of September, Campbell bringing from the Virginia section of the Holston region four hundred men, Sevier and Shelby two hundred and forty each, while the refugees who had fled across the mountains under McDowell amounted to about one hundred and sixty.

To raise money for provisions Sevier and Shelby were obliged to take, on their individual guaranties, the funds that had been received from the sale of lands.

They amounted in all to nearly thirteen thousand dollars, every dollar of which they afterward refunded.

On the 26th they began to march, over a thousand strong, most of them mounted on swift, wiry horses. Their fringed and tasseled hunting-shirts were girded in by bead-worked belts, and the trappings of their horses were stained red and yellow. On their heads they wore caps of coon-skin or mink-skin, with the tails hanging down, or else felt hats, in each of which was thrust a buck-tail or a sprig of evergreen. Every man carried a small-bore rifle, a tomahawk, and a scalping-knife. A very few of the officers had swords, and there was not a bayonet nor a tent in the army. Before leaving their camping-ground at the Sycamore Shoals they gathered in an open grove to hear a stern old Presbyterian preacher invoke on the enterprise the blessing of Jehovah.

The army marched along Doe River, driving their beef cattle with them, and went up the pass between Roan and Yellow Mountains. The table-land on the top was deep in snow. Here two Tories who were in Sevier's band deserted and fled to warn Ferguson; and the troops, on learning of the desertion, abandoned their purpose of following the direct route, and turned to the left, taking a more northerly trail. On they went, down through the ravines and across the spurs by a stony and precipitous path, crossing the Blue Ridge at Gillespie's Gap. That night they camped on the North Fork of the Catawba, and next day they went down the river to Quaker Meadows.

At this point they were joined by three hundred and fifty North Carolina militia, who were creeping along through the woods hoping to fall in with some party going to harass the enemy. They were under Col. Benjamin Cleavland, a mighty hunter and Indian fighter, famous for his great size and his skill with the rifle, no less than for the curious mixture of courage, rough good-humor, and brutality in his character. He bore a ferocious hatred to the royalists, and in the course of the vindictive civil war carried on between the Whigs and Tories in North Carolina he suffered much. He had no hope of redress, save in his own strength and courage, and on every favorable opportunity he hastened to take more than ample vengeance. His wife was a worthy helpmeet. Once, in his absence, a Tory horse-thief was brought to their home, and after some discussion the captors, Cleavland's sons, turned to their mother, who was placidly going on with her ordinary domestic work, to know what they should do with the prisoner. Taking from her mouth the corn-cob pipe she had been smoking, she coolly sentenced him to be hung, and hung he was without further delay or scruple.

The Tories were already on the alert. Some of them had been harassing Cleavland, and had ambushed his advance guard. But they did not dare try to arrest the progress of so formidable a body of men as had been gathered together at Quaker Meadows; and contented themselves with sending repeated warnings to Ferguson.

On October 1st the combined forces marched past



Pilot Mountain, and camped near the heads of Cane and Silver Creeks. Hitherto each colonel had commanded his own men, there being no general head, and every morning and evening the colonels had met in concert to decide the day's movements. The whole expedition was one of volunteers, the agreement between the officers and the obedience rendered them by the soldiers simply depending on their own free-will; there was no legal authority on which to go, for the commanders had called out the militia without any instructions from the executives of their several States. Disorders had naturally broken out.

At so important a crisis the good-sense and sincere patriotism of the men in command made them sink all personal and local rivalries. On the 2d of October they all gathered to see what could be done to stop the disorders and give the army a single head; for it was thought that in a day or two they would close in with Ferguson. They were in Col. Charles McDowell's district, and he was the senior officer; but the others distrusted his activity and judgment, and were not willing that he should command. To solve the difficulty Shelby proposed that supreme command should be given to Colonel Campbell, who had brought the largest body of men with him, and who was a Virginian, whereas the other four colonels were North Carolinians. This proposition was agreed to; its adoption did much to ensure the subsequent success.

The mountain army had again begun its march on the afternoon of the third day of the month. Before

starting the colonels summoned their men, told them the nature and danger of the service, and asked such as were unwilling to go farther to step to the rear; but not a man did so. Then Shelby made them a short speech, telling them, when they encountered the enemy, not to wait for the word of command, but each to "be his own officer," and to shelter himself as far as possible, and not to throw away a chance; if they came on the British in the woods they were "to give them Indian play," and advance from tree to tree, pressing the enemy unceasingly. He ended by promising them that their officers would shrink from no danger, but would lead them everywhere, and, in their turn, they must be on the alert and obey orders.

When they set out, their uncertainty as to Ferguson's movements caused them to go slowly, their scouts sometimes skirmishing with lurking Tories. They reached the mouth of Cane Creek, near Gilbert Town, on October 4th. Meantime they had been joined by several bands of refugee Georgians, while a much larger force under Lacey and Hill was rapidly approaching them. Lacey, riding over from these companies who were marching from Flint Hill, reported the direction in which Ferguson had fled, and at the same time appointed the Cowpens as the meeting-place for their respective forces. That evening Campbell and his fellow-officers held a council to decide what course was best to follow. Their whole army was so jaded that they could not possibly overtake Ferguson; yet his flight made them feel all the

more confident that they could beat him, and extremely reluctant that he should get away. In consequence, at daybreak on the morning of the 6th, seven hundred and fifty of the least tired, best armed, and best mounted men pushed rapidly after the foe.

Riding all day, they reached the Cowpens a few minutes after the arrival of the Flint Hill militia under Lacey and Hill. In the council that was then held it was decided once more to choose the freshest soldiers, and fall on Ferguson before he could retreat or be reinforced. Again the officers went round, picking out the best men, the best rifles, and the best horses. Shortly after nine o'clock the choice had been made, and nine hundred and ten picked riflemen, well mounted, rode out of the circle of flickering firelight, and began their night journey. A few determined footmen followed, and actually reached the battle-field in season to do their share of the fighting.

All this time Ferguson had not been idle. He first heard of the advance of the backwoodsmen on September 30th, from the two Tories who deserted Sevier on Yellow Mountain. On the 1st of October he sent out a proclamation well suited to goad into action the rough Tories, and the doubtful men, to whom it was addressed. He told them that the Back Water men had crossed the mountains, with chieftains at their head who would surely grant mercy to none who had been loyal to the King. He called on them to grasp their arms on the moment and run to his standard, if they desired to live and bear the name of men; to rally without delay, un-

less they wished to be eaten up by the incoming horde of cruel barbarians, to be themselves robbed and murdered, and to see their daughters and wives abused by the dregs of mankind. In ending, he told them scornfully that if they choose to be spat upon and degraded forever by a set of mongrels, to say so at once, that their women might turn their backs on them and look out for real men to protect them.

Exaggerated reports of the increase in the number of his foes were brought to Ferguson, as he gradually drew off from the mountains, doubling and turning so as to puzzle his pursuers and gain time for his friends to gather; for on every day furloughed men rejoined him, and bands of loyalists came into camp; and he was in momentary expectation of help from Cornwallis. As to the report that the approaching foe was from Kentucky, and that Boone himself was among the number, Ferguson cared very little; but, keeping, as he supposed, a safe distance away from them, he halted at King's Mountain in South Carolina on the evening of October 6th, pitching his camp on a steep, narrow hill just south of the North Carolina boundary.

The King's Mountain range itself is about sixteen miles in length, extending in a southwesterly course from one State into the other. The stony, half-isolated ridge on which Ferguson camped was some six or seven hundred yards long and half as broad from base to base, or two thirds that distance on top. The steep sides were clad with a growth of open woods, including both saplings and big timber. Ferguson parked his baggage

wagons along the northeastern part of the mountain. The next day he did not move; he was as near to the army of Cornwallis at Charlotte as to the mountaineers, and he thought it safe to remain where he was. He deemed the position one of great strength, as indeed it would have been, if assailed in the ordinary European fashion; and he was confident that even if the rebels attacked him, he could readily beat them back. But as General Lee, "Light-Horse Harry," afterwards remarked, the hill was much easier assaulted with the rifle than defended with the bayonet.

The backwoodsmen, on leaving the camp at the Cowpens, marched slowly through the night, which was dark and drizzly, keeping a little out of the straight route, to avoid any patrol parties; and at sunrise—the morning of October 7th—they splashed across the Cherokee Ford. Throughout the forenoon the rain continued, but the troops pushed steadily onwards without halting, wrapping their blankets and the skirts of their hunting-shirts round their gun-locks, to keep them dry. Some horses gave out, but their riders, like the thirty or forty footmen who had followed from the Cowpens, struggled onwards and were in time for the battle. When near King's Mountain they captured two Tories, and from them learned Ferguson's exact position; that "he was on a ridge between two branches," where some deer hunters had camped the previous fall. These deer hunters, now with the oncoming backwoodsmen, declared that they knew the ground well. Without halting, Campbell and the











other colonels rode forward together, and agreed to surround the hill, so that their men might fire upwards without risk of hurting one another. From one or two other captured Tories, and from a staunch Whig friend, they learned the exact disposition of the British and loyalist force, and were told that Ferguson wore a light, parti-colored hunting-shirt; and he was forthwith doomed to be a special target for the backwoods rifles.

A mile from the hill the final arrangements were made, and the men, who had been marching in loose order, formed in line of battle. They then rode forward in absolute silence, and, when close to the west slope of the battle-hill, dismounted and tied their horses to trees, fastening their great coats and blankets to the saddles. A few of the officers remained mounted. The countersign of the day was "Buford," the name of the colonel whose troops Tarleton had defeated and butchered. The final order was for each man to look carefully at the priming of his rifle, and then to fight to the death. The right of the American center was composed of Campbell's troops; the left center of Shelby's. These two bodies separated slightly so as to come up opposite sides of the narrow southwestern spur of the mountain. The right wing was led by Sevier, with his own and McDowell's troops. On the extreme right Major Winston, splitting off from the main body a few minutes before, had led a portion of Cleavland's men by a roundabout route to take the mountain in the rear, and cut off all retreat. He and his followers "rode like fox-hunters" until they reached the foot of

the mountain, galloping at full speed through the rock-strewn woods; and they struck exactly the right place, closing up the only gap by which the enemy could have retreated. The left wing, led by Cleavland, contained the bulk of the North and South Carolinians who had joined the army at the Cowpens. The different leaders cheered on their troops by a few last words as they went into the fight; being especially careful to warn them how to deal with the British bayonet charges, and, when forced back, to rally and return at once to the fight.

When Ferguson learned that his foes were on him, he sprang on his horse, his drums beat to arms, and he instantly made ready for the fight. Though surprised by the unexpected approach of the Americans, he exerted himself with such energy that his troops were in battle array when the attack began. The outcrops of slaty rock on the hillsides made ledges which, together with the boulders strewn on top, served as breastworks for the less disciplined Tories; while he in person led his regulars and such of the loyalist companies as were furnished with the hunting-knife bayonets. He hoped to be able to repluse his enemies by himself taking the offensive, with a succession of bayonet charges; a form of attack in which his experience with Pulaski and Huger had given him great confidence.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the firing began, as the Americans drove in the British pickets. Campbell began the assault, riding along the line of his riflemen, and ordering them to raise the Indian war-whoop.

They then rushed upwards and began to fire. Ferguson's men on the summit responded with heavy volley-firing, and then charged, cheering lustily. The mountain was covered with smoke and flame, and seemed to thunder. Ferguson's troops advanced steadily, their officers riding at their head with their swords flashing; and the mountaineers, who had no bayonets, could not withstand the shock. They fled down the hillside, and, being sinewy, nimble men, swift of foot, they were not overtaken, save a few of sullen temper, who would not retreat and were bayoneted. No sooner had the British charge spent itself than Campbell called out in a voice of thunder to rally and return to the fight, and in a minute or two they were all climbing the hill again, going from tree to tree, and shooting at the soldiers on the summit. Campbell's horse, exhausted by the break-neck galloping hither and thither over the slope, gave out; he then led the men on foot, his voice hoarse with shouting, his face blackened with powder.

No sooner had Ferguson returned from his charge on Campbell than he found Shelby's men swarming up to the attack on the other side. Shelby had refused to let his people return the dropping fire of the Tory skirmishers until they were close up. Ferguson promptly charged his new foes and drove them down the hillside; but the instant he stopped, Shelby brought his marksmen up nearer than ever, and with a deadlier fire. While Ferguson's bayonet-men—both regulars and militia—charged to and fro, the rest of the loyalists kept up a heavy fire from behind the rocks on the hill-

top. The battle raged in every part, for the Americans had by this time surrounded their foes, and were advancing rapidly under cover of the woods. Ferguson, conspicuous from his hunting-shirt, rode hither and thither with reckless bravery, his sword in his left hand—for he had never entirely regained the use of his right, which had been wounded at Brandywine; while he made his presence known by the shrill, ear-piercing notes of a silver whistle which he always carried. Whenever the British and Tories charged with the bayonet, the mountaineers were forced back down the hill; but the instant the red lines halted and returned to the summit, the stubborn riflemen followed close behind, and from every tree and boulder continued their irregular and destructive fire. The peculiar feature of the battle was the success with which, after every retreat, Campbell, Shelby, Sevier, and Cleavland rallied their followers on the instant; the great point was to prevent the men from becoming panic-stricken when forced to flee. The pealing volleys of musketry at short intervals drowned the incessant clatter of the less noisy but more deadly backwoods rifles. The wild whoops of the mountain men, the cheering of the loyalists, the shouts of the officers, and the cries of the wounded mingled with the reports of the firearms; and shrill above the din rose the calling of the silver whistle. Wherever its notes were heard, the wavering British line came on, and the Americans were forced back. Ferguson dashed from point to point, to repel the attacks of his foes, which were made with ever-increasing fury.

Two horses were killed under him; but he continued to lead the charging parties; slashing and hewing with his sword until it was broken off at the hilt. At last, as he rode full speed against a part of Sevier's men, who had almost gained the hill crest, he became a fair mark for the vengeful backwoods riflemen, and he fell, pierced by half a dozen bullets. The gallant British leader was dead, and the silver whistle was now silent.

During one of the bayonet charges, a backwoodsman was in the act of cocking his rifle when a loyalist, dashing at him with the bayonet, pinned his hand to his thigh; the rifle went off, the ball going through the loyalist's body and the two men fell together. As the lines came close together, many of the Whigs recognized in the Tory ranks their former neighbors, friends, or relatives; and the men taunted and jeered one another with bitter hatred. In more than one instance brother was slain by brother or cousin by cousin. The lowland Tories felt an especial dread of the mountaineers; looking with awe and hatred on their tall, gaunt, rawboned figures, their long, matted hair and wild faces.

Now that the British regulars had lost half their number, that the militia was in the same plight, and that the Tories, the least disciplined, could no longer be held to their work, the loyalist army broke and fled. De Peyster, the next in command, rallied the fugitives among the tents and baggage wagons, where he again formed them. But their foes still surrounded them on every hand, after the fighting had lasted an hour; and as all hope was gone, he hoisted a white flag.

In the confusion the firing continued in parts of the lines on both sides. Some of the backwoodsmen did not know what a white flag meant; others disregarded it, savagely calling out, "Give them Buford's play," in allusion to Tarleton's having refused quarter to Buford's troops. Others of the men as they came up began shooting before they learned what had happened. A number of the loyalists escaped in turmoil, putting badges in their hats like those worn by certain of the American militia, and thus passing in safety through the Whig lines. It was at this time, after the white flag had been displayed, that Colonel Williams was shot, as he charged a few of the Tories who were still firing. The flag was hoisted again, and white handkerchiefs were also waved, from guns and ramrods. Shelby, spurring up to part of the line, ordered the Tories to lay down their arms, which they did. Campbell, at the same moment, running among his men with his sword pointed to the ground, called on them for God's sake to cease firing; and turning to the prisoners he bade the officers rank by themselves, and the men to take off their hats and sit down. He then ordered De Peyster to dismount; which the latter did, and handed his sword to Campbell. The various British officers likewise surrendered their swords, to different Americans; many of the militia commanders who had hitherto only possessed a tomahawk or scalping-knife thus for the first time getting possession of one of the coveted weapons.

Of the entire British and Tory force about three hundred were killed or disabled; and of their four militia

colonels, two were killed, one wounded, and the other captured—a sufficient proof of the obstinacy of the resistance. The American loss in killed and wounded amounted to less than half that of their foes. Campbell's command suffered more than any other, the loss among the officers being especially great; for it bore the chief part in withstanding the successive bayonet charges of the regulars, and the officers had been forced to expose themselves with the utmost freedom, in order to rally their men when beaten back.

The mountaineers had done a most notable deed—a striking example of the individual initiative so characteristic of the backwoodsmen. They had shown in perfection the best qualities of horse-riflemen. Their hardihood and perseverance had enabled them to bear up well under fatigue, exposure, and scanty food. Their long, swift ride, and the suddenness of the attack, took their foes completely by surprise. Then, leaving their horses, they had shown in the actual battle such courage, marksmanship, and skill in woodland fighting, that they had not only defeated but captured an equal number of well-armed, well-led, resolute men, in a strong position. The victory was of far-reaching importance, and ranks among the decisive battles of the Revolution. It was the first great success of the Americans in the south, the turning-point in the southern campaign, and it brought cheer to the patriots throughout the Union. Its immediate effect was to cause Cornwallis to retreat from North Carolina, abandoning his first invasion of that State.



The day after the battle the Americans, after burying their dead, fell back towards the mountains, fearing lest, while cumbered by prisoners and wounded, they should be struck by Tarleton. The prisoners were marched along on foot, each carrying one or two muskets, for twelve hundred had been captured. The Americans had little to eat; but the plight of the prisoners was pitiable. Hungry, footsore, and heart-broken, they were hurried along by their victors, who gloried in the vengeance they had taken, and recked little of magnanimity to the fallen.

It had come to be common for the victors on both sides to hang those whom they regarded as the chief offenders among their conquered opponents. As the different districts were alternately overrun, the unfortunate inhabitants were compelled to swear allegiance in succession to Congress and to king; and then, on whichever side they bore arms, they were branded as traitors. Cornwallis, seconded by Rawdon, had set the example of ordering all men found in the rebel ranks after having sworn allegiance to the king to be hung; his under-officers executed the command with zeal, and the Americans, of course, retaliated. Ferguson's troops themselves had hung some of their prisoners.

All this was fresh in the minds of the Americans who had just won so decisive a victory. Inflamed by hatred and the thirst for vengeance, they would probably have put to death some of their prisoners in any event; but all doubt was at an end when, on their return march, they learned that Cruger's victori-

ous loyalists had hung a dozen of the captured patriots. This news settled the doom of some of the Tory prisoners. A week after the battle thirty were condemned to death; but when nine, including the only Tory colonel who had survived the battle, were hung, Sevier and Shelby peremptorily interfered, saving the remainder.

Leaving the prisoners in the hands of the lowland militia, the mountaineers returned to their secure fastnesses in the high hill-valleys of the Holston, the Watauga, and the Nolichucky. They had marched well and fought valiantly, and had gained a great victory; all the little stockaded forts, all the rough log-cabins on the scattered clearings, were jubilant over the triumph. From that moment their three leaders were men of renown. The legislatures of their respective States thanked them publicly, and voted them swords for their services.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE HOLSTON SETTLEMENTS TO THE END OF THE REVOLUTION, 1781-1783

**W**HEN the men of the Holston or upper Tennessee valley settlements reached their homes after the King's Mountain expedition, they found them menaced by the Cherokees. A constant succession of small bands moved swiftly through the county, burning cabins, taking scalps, and, above all, stealing horses. As the most effectual way of stopping such inroads, the alarmed and angered settlers resolved to send a formidable retaliatory expedition against the Overhill towns. All the Holston settlements both north and south of the Virginia line joined in sending troops. By the first week in December, 1780, they had seven hundred mounted riflemen ready to march, under the joint leadership of Colonel Arthur Campbell and of Sevier, the former being the senior officer. They were to meet at an appointed place on the French Broad.

Sevier, starting first, fell in with an Indian band returning from a foray, and, attacking it, took thirteen scalps and all their plunder. Having thus made a very pretty stroke, he returned to the French Broad, where

Campbell joined him on the 22d, with four hundred troops. Together they laid waste the country of the Overhill Cherokees, burning a thousand cabins, fifty thousand bushels of corn, killing twenty-nine warriors, and capturing seventeen women and children.

Before returning, the commanders issued an address to the Otari chiefs and warriors, setting forth what the white troops had done, telling the Indians it was a just punishment for their folly and perfidy in consenting to carry out the wishes of the British agents; it warned them shortly to come in and treat for peace, lest their country should again be visited, and not only laid waste but conquered and held for all time.

Though the success of this expedition gave much relief to the border, Sevier determined to try one of his swift, sudden strokes against the warriors from the middle towns who were coming to the help of their disheartened Overhill brethren. Early in March he rode off at the head of a hundred and fifty picked horsemen. For a hundred and fifty miles he led them through a mountainous wilderness where there was not so much as a hunter's trail, through the deep defiles and among the towering peaks of the Great Smoky Mountains, descending by passes so precipitous that it was with difficulty the men led down them even such sure-footed beasts as their hardy hill-horses. At last they burst out of the woods and fell like a thunderbolt on the middle towns nestling in their high gorges. Falling on their main town, he took it by surprise and stormed it, killing thirty warriors and capturing a large

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number of women and children; he burnt two other towns and three small villages, destroying much provision and capturing two hundred horses,—all with the loss of but one man killed, and one wounded. Before the startled warriors could gather to attack him he plunged once more into the wilderness, carrying his prisoners and plunder, and driving the captured horses before him; and so swift were his motions that he got back in safety to the settlements.

In the early summer he made another quick inroad south of the French Broad. At the head of over a hundred hard riders he fell suddenly on the camp of a war party, took a dozen scalps, and scattered the rest of the Indians in every direction. A succession of these blows completely humbled the Cherokees, and they sued for peace; thanks to Sevier's tactics, they had suffered more loss than they had inflicted, an almost unknown thing in these wars with the forest Indians. In midsummer peace was made by a treaty at the Great Island of the Holston.

Early in 1782 fresh difficulties arose with the Indians. In the war just ended the Cherokees themselves had been chiefly to blame. The whites were now in their turn the aggressors, the trouble being that they encroached on lands secured to the red men by solemn treaty. Settlements were being made south of the French Broad. This alarmed and irritated the Indians and they sent repeated remonstrances to Major Martin, who was Indian agent, and also to the governor of North Carolina. The latter wrote Sevier, directing

him to drive off the intruding settlers, and pull down their cabins. Sevier did not obey. He took purely the frontier view of the question, and he had no intention of harassing his own staunch adherents for the sake of the savages whom he had so often fought. He had much justification for his refusal, too, in the fact that, when the Americans reconquered the southern States, many Tories fled to the Cherokee towns, and incited the savages to hostility; and the outlying settlements of the borderers were being burned and plundered by members of the very tribes whose chiefs were at the same time writing to the governor to complain of the white encroachments.

The worst members of each race committed crimes against the other, and not only did the retaliation often fall on the innocent, but, unfortunately, even the good men were apt to make common cause with the criminals of their own color. Thus in July the Chickamaugas sent in a "talk" for peace; but at that very time a band of their young braves made a foray into Powell's Valley, killing two settlers and driving off some stock. They were pursued, one of their number killed, and most of the stock retaken. In the same month, on the other hand, two friendly Indians, who had a canoe laden with peltry, were murdered on the Holston by a couple of white ruffians, who then attempted to sell the furs. They were discovered, and the furs taken from them; but the people round about would not suffer the criminals to be brought to justice.

The great majority of the Cherokees of the Overhill

towns were still desirous of peace, and after a council of their head-men the chief, Old Tassel, of the town of Chota, sent on their behalf the following strong appeal to the governors of both Virginia and North Carolina.

“A Talk to Colonel Joseph Martin, by the Old Tassel, in Chota, the 25th of September, 1782, in favor of the whole nation. For His Excellency, the Governor of North Carolina. Present, all the chiefs of the friendly towns and a number of young men.

“Brother: I am now going to speak to you. I hope you will listen to me. A string. I intended to come this fall and see you, but there was such confusion in our country, I thought it best for me to stay at home and send my Talks by our friend Colonel Martin, who promised to deliver them safe to you. We are a poor distressed people, that is in great trouble, and we hope our elder brother will take pity on us and do us justice. Your people from Nolichucky are daily pushing us out of our lands. We have no place to hunt on. Your people have built houses within one day’s walk of our towns. We don’t want to quarrel with our elder brother; we, therefore, hope our elder brother will not take our lands from us, that the Great Man above gave us. He made you and he made us; we are all his children, and we hope our elder brother will take pity on us, and not take our lands from us that our father gave us, because he is stronger than we are. We are the first people that ever lived on this land; it is ours, and why will our elder brother take it from us? It is

true, some time past, the people over the great water persuaded some of our young men to do some mischief to our elder brother, which our principal men were sorry for. But you, our elder brothers, came to our towns and took satisfaction, and then sent for us to come and treat with you, which we did. Then our elder brother promised to have the line run between us agreeable to the first treaty, and all that should be found over the line should be moved off. But it is not done yet. We have done nothing to offend our elder brother since the last treaty, and why should our elder brother want to quarrel with us? We have sent to the Governor of Virginia on the same subject. We hope that between you both, you will take pity on your younger brother, and send Colonel Sevier, who is a good man, to have all your people moved off our land. I should say a great deal more, but our friend, Colonel Martin, knows all our grievances, and he can inform you. A string.”<sup>1</sup>

Although no immediate results followed these and other efforts for peace, towards the end of 1783 a definite peace was concluded with the Chickasaws, who ever afterwards remained friendly; but the Creeks and Cherokees continued to be a source of annoyance on the southern border. Nevertheless, all pressing danger from the Indians was over.

The Holston settlements thrived lustily. Wagon

<sup>1</sup> The “strings” of wampum were used to mark periods and to indicate, and act as reminders of, special points in the speech.



roads were made, leading into both Virginia and North Carolina. Settlers thronged into the country, the roads were well travelled, and the clearings became very numerous. The villages began to feel safe without stockades, save those on the extreme border, which were still built in the usual frontier style. The two towns of Abingdon and Jonesboro, respectively north and south of the Virginia line, were the centers of activity. In Jonesboro the log court-house, with its clapboard roof, was abandoned, and in its place a twenty-four-foot-square building of hewn logs was put up; it had a shingled roof and plank floors, and contained a justice's bench, a lawyer's and clerk's bar, and a sheriff's box to sit in.

Abingdon was a typical little frontier town of the class that immediately succeeded the stockaded hamlets. A public square had been laid out, round which, and down the straggling main street, the few buildings were scattered; all were of logs, from the court-house and small jail down. There were three or four taverns. There were a blacksmith shop and a couple of stores. The traders brought their goods from Alexandria, Baltimore, or even Philadelphia, and made a handsome profit. The lower taverns were scenes of drunken frolic, often ending in free fights. There was no constable, and the sheriff, when called to quell a disturbance, summoned as a posse those of the bystanders whom he deemed friendly to the cause of law and order. There were many strangers passing through; and the better class of these were welcome at the

rambling log-houses of the neighboring backwoods gentry, who often themselves rode into the taverns to learn from the travelers what was happening in the great world beyond the mountains. Court-day was a great occasion; all the neighborhood flocked in to gossip, lounge, race horses, and fight. Of course in such gatherings there were always certain privileged characters. At Abingdon these were to be found in the persons of a hunter named Edward Callahan, and his wife Sukey. As regularly as court-day came round, they appeared, Sukey driving a cart laden with pies, cakes, and drinkables, while Edward, whose rolls of furs and deer hides were also in the cart, stalked at its tail on foot, in full hunter's dress, with rifle, powder-horn, and bullet-bag, while his fine, well-taught hunting dog followed at his heels. Sukey would halt in the middle of the street, make an awning for herself and begin business, while Edward strolled off to see about selling his peltries. Sukey never would take out a license, and so was often in trouble for selling liquor. The judges were strict in proceeding against offenders—and even stricter against the unfortunate Tories—but they had a humorous liking for Sukey, which was shared by the various grand juries. By means of some excuse or other she was always let off, and in return showed great gratitude to such of her benefactors as came near her mountain cabin.

Court-day was apt to close with much hard drinking; for the backwoodsmen of every degree dearly loved whisky.

## CHAPTER XV

### ROBERTSON FOUNDS THE CUMBERLAND SETTLEMENT, 1779-1783

**R**OBERTSON had no share in the glory of King's Mountain, and no part in the subsequent career of the men who won it; for the man who had done more than any one in founding the settlements from which the victors came, had once more gone into the wilderness to build a new and even more typical frontier commonwealth, the westernmost of any yet founded by the backwoodsmen.

Robertson had been for ten years a leader among the Holston and Watauga people, and for the last two years (1777-1779) he was Indian Commissioner for North Carolina. He had been particularly successful in his dealings with the Indians, and by his missions to them had managed to keep the peace unbroken on more than one occasion when a war would have been disastrous to the whites. He was prosperous and successful in his private affairs; nevertheless, in 1779, the restless craving for change and adventure surged so strongly in his breast that it once more drove him to seek out a new home hundreds of miles farther in the heart of the hunting-grounds of the red warriors.

The point pitched upon was the beautiful country lying along the great bend of the Cumberland, a spot well known to hunters since the time when old Kasper Mansker and others began their trips thither ten years before. Early in the spring of 1779 Robertson had left the Watauga settlements with eight companions, reaching the Cumberland without mishap, and fixing on the neighborhood of the Bluff, the ground near the French Lick, as that best suited for their purpose. A few days after their arrival they were joined by another batch of hunter-settlers who had come out under the leadership of Kasper Mansker.

As soon as the corn was planted and cabins put up, most of the intending settlers returned to their old homes to bring out their families, leaving three of their number "to keep the buffaloes out of the corn." Robertson himself first went north through the wilderness to see George Rogers Clark in Illinois, to purchase cabin-rights from him, under the Virginia law which gave each man, for a small sum, a thousand acres on condition of his building a cabin and raising a crop. This journey gives an insight into the motives that influenced the adventurers. For though they were impelled largely by sheer restlessness and love of change, the most powerful spring of action was the desire to gain land—not merely land for settlement, but land for speculative purposes. At this time it was uncertain whether Cumberland lay in Virginia or North Carolina, as the line was not run until the following spring. As it turned out, Robertson might have

spared himself the trip, for the settlement proved to be well within the Carolina boundary.

In the fall many men came out to the new settlement, guided thither by Robertson and Mansker, among them two or three of the Long Hunters whose wanderings had done so much to make the country known. Robertson's especial partner, a man named John Donelson, also came, bringing a large party of immigrants, including all the women and children, down the Tennessee and thence up the Ohio and Cumberland to the Bluff or French Lick. Among them were Robertson's entire family, and Donelson's daughter Rachel, the future wife of Andrew Jackson, who missed by so narrow a margin being mistress of the White House. Robertson, meanwhile, led the rest of the men by land, so that they should get there first and make ready for the coming of their families.

The expedition led by Donelson embarked at Holston, Long Island, on December 22d, but falling water and heavy frosts detained them two months, so that the voyage did not really begin until February 27, 1780. The first ten days were uneventful. The *Adventure*, the flag-ship of the flotilla, spent an afternoon and night on a shoal, until the water fortunately rose, and the clumsy scow floated off. Another boat was driven on the point of an island and sunk, her crew being nearly drowned; whereupon the rest of the flotilla put to shore, the sunken boat was raised and bailed out, and most of her cargo recovered.

They soon came to an Indian village on the south

shore. The Indians made signs of friendliness, and several canoes then came off from the shore to the flotilla. The Indians in them seemed pleased with the presents they received; but when a number of other canoes put off, loaded with armed warriors, the whites pushed off at once. The armed Indians went down along the shore for some time as if to intercept them; but at last they were seemingly left behind.

There was with the flotilla a boat containing twenty-eight men, women, and children, among whom small-pox had broken out. To guard against infection, it was agreed that it should keep well in the rear; being warned each night by the sound of a horn when it was time to go into camp. As this forlorn boat-load came along, Indians of another village, seeing its defenceless position, sallied out in their canoes, and butchered or captured all who were aboard. Their cries were distinctly heard by the rearmost of the other craft, who could not stem the current and come to their rescue. But a dreadful retribution fell on the Indians; for they were infected with the disease of their victims, and for some months virulent smallpox raged among many of the bands of Creeks and Cherokees.

When the boats entered the Narrows, they had lost sight of the Indians on shore, and thought they had left them behind. A man, who was in a canoe, had gone aboard one of the larger boats with his family, for the sake of safety while passing through the rough water. His canoe was towed alongside, and in the rapids it was overturned, and the cargo lost. The rest

of the company, pitying his distress over the loss of all his worldly goods, landed to see if they could not help him recover some of his property. Just then the Indians suddenly appeared almost over them, on the high cliffs opposite, and began to fire, causing a hurried retreat to the boats. For some distance the Indians lined the bluffs, firing from the heights into the boats below. Yet only four people were wounded, and they not dangerously. One of them was a girl named Nancy Gower. When, by the sudden onslaught of the Indians, the crew of the boat which she was in were thrown into dismay, she took the helm and steered, exposed to the fire of the savages. A ball went through the upper part of one of her thighs, but she neither flinched nor uttered any cry; and it was not known that she was wounded until, after the danger was past, her mother saw the blood soaking through her clothes. She recovered, married one of the frontiersmen, and lived for fifty years afterwards, long enough to see all the wilderness filled with flourishing and populous States.

Having successfully run the gauntlet of the Chickamauga banditti, the flotilla was not again molested by the Indians. They ran over the great Muscle Shoals in about three hours without accident. The swift, broken water surged into high waves, and roared through the piles of driftwood that covered the points of the small islands, round which the currents ran in every direction; and those among the men who were unused to river-work were much relieved when they found themselves in safety.

On the 20th of the month they reached the Ohio. Some of the boats then left for Natchez, and others for the Illinois country; while the remainder turned their prows up stream, to stem the rapid current of the Ohio—a task for which they were but ill-suited. The work was very hard, the provisions were nearly gone, and the crews were almost worn out by hunger and fatigue. On the 24th of March they entered the mouth of the Cumberland. The *Adventure*, the heaviest of all the craft, got much help from a small square sail that was set in the bow. But it was not until April 24th that they reached the Big Salt Lick, and found Robertson awaiting them. The long, toilsome, and perilous voyage had been brought to a safe end.

There were then probably nearly five hundred settlers on the Cumberland, one half of them being able-bodied men in the prime of life. The central station, the capital of the little community, was that at the Bluff, where Robertson built a little stockaded hamlet and called it Nashborough. Among the other Cumberland stations was Mansker's (usually called Kasper's), Stone River, Bledsoe's, Freeland's, Eatons', Clover-Bottom, and Fort Union.

True to their customs and traditions, and to their race-capacity for self-rule, the settlers determined forthwith to organize some kind of government under which justice might be done among themselves and protection afforded against outside attack. Not only had the Indians begun their ravages, but turbulent and disorderly whites were also causing trouble. Robertson,



who had been so largely instrumental in founding the Watauga settlement, and in giving it laws, naturally took the lead in organizing this, the second community which he had caused to spring up in the wilderness.

The settlers, by their representatives, met together at Nashborough, and on May 1, 1780, entered into articles of agreement or a compact of government. It was doubtless drawn up by Robertson, with perhaps the help of Henderson, and was modelled upon what may be called the "constitution" of Watauga, with some hints from that of Transylvania. The settlers ratified the deeds of their delegates on May 13th, when to the number of two hundred and fifty-six men they signed the articles. The signers practically guaranteed one another their rights in the land, and their personal security against wrong-doers; those who did not sign were treated as having no rights whatever—a proper and necessary measure, as it was essential that the naturally lawless elements should be forced to acknowledge some kind of authority.

The compact provided that the affairs of the community should be administered by a Court of twelve Judges, or Triers, to be elected in the different stations by vote of all the freemen in them who were over twenty-one years of age, three to come from Nashborough, two from Mansker's, two from Bledsoe's, and one from each of five other named stations. The Court had jurisdiction in all cases of conflict over land titles, for the recovery of debt or damages, and was allowed to tax costs. The Court appointed whomso-

ever it pleased to see decisions executed. It had power to punish all offences against the peace of the community, all misdemeanors and criminal acts, provided only that its decisions did not go so far as to affect the life of the criminal. If the misdeed of the accused was such as to be dangerous to the State, or one "for which the benefit of clergy was taken away by law," he was to be bound and sent under guard to some place where he could be legally dealt with. In this and various ways a little commonwealth, a self-governing state, was created on the banks of the Cumberland as a temporary method of restraining the evil-disposed until the State should give the little community some legal form of government.

For several years after their arrival the Cumberland settlers were worried beyond description by a succession of small war parties. In 1781 they raised no corn; in the next they made a few crops on fields they had cleared in 1780. Many of the settlers were killed, many others left for Kentucky, Illinois, or Natchez, or returned to their old homes among the Alleghanies; and in 1782 the inhabitants, who had steadily dwindled in numbers, became so discouraged that they mooted the question of abandoning the Cumberland district in a body. Only Robertson's great influence prevented this being done; but by word and example he finally persuaded them to remain. The following spring brought the news of peace with Great Britain. A large inflow of new settlers began with the new year; the Cumberland country thrived apace; and by the end of 1783 the old stations had been rebuilt and many new ones founded.

## CHAPTER XVI

### WHAT THE WESTERNERS HAD DONE DURING THE REVOLUTION, 1783

**W**HEN the first Continental Congress began its sittings, the only frontiersmen west of the mountains, and beyond the limits of continuous settlement within the old Thirteen Colonies, were the two or three hundred citizens of the little Watauga commonwealth. When peace was declared with Great Britain, the backwoodsmen had spread westward, in groups, almost to the Mississippi, and they had increased in number to some twenty-five thousand souls, of whom a few hundred dwelt in the bend of the Cumberland, while the rest were about equally divided between Kentucky and Holston.

This great westward movement of armed settlers was essentially one of conquest, no less than of colonization. Thronging in with their wives and children, their cattle, and their few household goods they won and held the land in the teeth of fierce resistance, both from the Indian claimants of the soil and from the representatives of a mighty and arrogant European power. The chain of events by which the winning was achieved is perfect; had any link therein snapped, it is likely that

the final results would have been failure. The wide wanderings of Boone and his fellow-hunters made the country known, and awakened in the minds of the frontiersmen a keen desire to possess it. The building of the Watauga commonwealth by Robertson and Sevier gave a base of operations, and furnished a model for similar communities to follow. Lord Dunmore's war made the actual settlement possible, for it cowed the northern Indians, and restrained them from seriously molesting Kentucky during its first and more feeble years. Henderson and Boone made their great treaty with the Cherokees in 1775, and then established a permanent colony far beyond all previous settlements, entering into final possession of the new country. The victory over the Cherokees in 1776 made safe the line of communication along the Wilderness Road, and secured the chance for further expansion. Clark's campaigns gained the Illinois, or northwestern regions. The growth of Kentucky then became very rapid; and in its turn this, and the steady progress of the Watauga settlements, rendered possible Robertson's successful effort to plant a new community still farther west, on the Cumberland.

The backwoodsmen pressed in on the line of least resistance, first taking possession of the debatable hunting-grounds lying between the Algonquins of the North and the Appalachian confederacies of the South. Then they began to encroach on the actual tribal territories. Every step was accompanied by stubborn and bloody fighting with the Indians. The forest tribes

were exceedingly formidable opponents; it is not too much to say that they formed a far more serious obstacle to the American advance than would have been offered by an equal number of the best European troops. Their victories over Braddock, Grant, and St. Clair, gained in each case with a smaller force, conclusively proved their superiority, on their own ground, over the best regulars, disciplined and commanded in the ordinary manner. Almost all of the victories, even of the backwoodsmen, were won against inferior numbers of Indians. The red men were fickle of temper, and large bodies could not be kept together for a long campaign, nor, indeed, for more than one special stroke; the only piece of strategy any of their chiefs showed was Cornstalk's march past Dunmore to attack Lewis; but their tactics and discipline in the battle itself were admirably adapted to the very peculiar conditions of forest warfare. Writers who speak of them as undisciplined, or as any but most redoubtable antagonists, fall into an absurd error. An old Indian fighter, who, at the close of the last century, wrote, from experience, a good book on the subject, summed up the case very justly when he said: "I apprehend that the Indian discipline is as well calculated to answer the purpose in the woods of America as the British discipline is in Flanders; and British discipline in the woods is the way to have men slaughtered, with scarcely any chance of defending themselves." A comparison of the two victories gained by the backwoodsmen at the Great Kanawha, over the Indians, and at King's Mountain over Ferguson's











British and Tories—brings out clearly the formidable fighting capacity of the red men. At the Kanawha the Americans outnumbered their foes, at King's Mountain they were no more than equal; yet in the former battle they suffered twice the loss they did in the latter, inflicted much less damage in return, and did not gain nearly so decisive a victory.

The Indians were urged on by the British, who furnished them with arms, ammunition, and provisions, and sometimes also with leaders and with bands of auxiliary white troops, French, British, and Tories. It was this that gave to the Revolutionary contest its twofold character, making it on the part of the Americans a struggle for independence in the East, and in the West a war of conquest, or rather a war to establish, on behalf of all our people, the right of entry into the fertile and vacant regions beyond the Alleghanies. The grievances of the backwoodsmen were not the same as the grievances of the men of the seacoast.

The Ohio valley and the other Western lands of the French had been conquered by the British, not the Americans. Great Britain had succeeded to the policy as well as the possessions of her predecessor, and, strange to say, had become almost equally hostile to the colonists of her own stock. As France had striven for half a century, so England now in her turn strove, to bar out the settlers of English race from the country beyond the Alleghanies. The British Crown, Parliament, and people were a unit in wishing to keep woodland and prairie for the sole use of their own merchants,

as regions tenanted only by Indian hunters and French trappers and traders. They became the guardians and allies of all the Indian tribes. On the other hand, the American backwoodsmen were resolute in their determination to go in and possess the land. The aims of the two sides thus clashed hopelessly. Under all temporary and apparent grounds of quarrel lay this deep-rooted jealousy and incompatibility of interests. Beyond the Alleghanies the Revolution was fundamentally a struggle between England, bent on restricting the growth of the English race, and the Americans, triumphantly determined to acquire the right to conquer the continent.

Had not the backwoodsmen been successful in the various phases of the struggle, we would certainly have been cooped up between the sea and the mountains. If in 1774 and '76 they had been beaten by the Ohio tribes and the Cherokees, the border ravaged, and the settlements stopped or forced back as during what the colonists called Braddock's War, there is every reason to believe that the Alleghanies would have become our western frontier. Similarly, if Clark had failed in his efforts to conquer and hold the Illinois and Vincennes, it is overwhelmingly probable that the Ohio would have been the boundary between the Americans and the British. Before the Revolution began in 1774, the British Parliament had, by the Quebec Act, declared the country between the Great Lakes and the Ohio to be part of Canada; and under the provisions of this act the British officers continued to do as they had already done—that is, to hold adverse possession of the land, scornfully

heedless of the claims of the different colonies. The country was *de facto* part of Canada; the Americans tried to conquer it exactly as they tried to conquer the rest of Canada; the only difference was that Clark succeeded, whereas Arnold and Montgomery failed.

Of course, the conquest by the backwoodsmen was by no means the sole cause of our acquisition of the West. The sufferings and victories of the Westerners would have counted for nothing had it not been for the success of the American arms in the East, and for the skill of our three treaty-makers at Paris—Jay, Adams, and Franklin, but above all the two former, and especially Jay. On the other hand, it was the actual occupation and holding of the country that gave our diplomats their vantage-ground. When the treaty was made, in 1782, the commissioners of the United States represented a people already holding the whole Ohio valley, as well as the Illinois. The circumstances of the treaty were peculiar; but here they need to be touched but briefly, and only so far as they affected the western boundaries. The United States, acting together with France and Spain, had just closed a successful war with England; but when the peace negotiations were begun, they speedily found that their allies were, if anything, more anxious than their enemy to hamper their growth. England, having conceded the grand point of independence, was disposed to be generous, and not to haggle about lesser matters. Spain, on the contrary, was quite as hostile to the new nation as to England. Through her representative, Count Aranda, she predicted the

future enormous expansion of the Federal Republic at the expense of Florida, Louisiana, and Mexico, unless it was effectually curbed in its youth. The prophecy has been strikingly fulfilled, and the event has thoroughly justified Spain's fear; for the major part of the present territory of the United States was under Spanish dominion at the close of the Revolutionary War. Spain, therefore, proposed to hem in our growth by giving us the Alleghanies for our western boundary. France was the ally of America; but as between America and Spain, she favored the latter. Moreover, she wished us to remain weak enough to be dependent upon her further good graces. The French court, therefore, proposed that the United States should content themselves with so much of the trans-Alleghany territory as lay round the headwaters of the Tennessee and between the Cumberland and Ohio. This area contained the bulk of the land that was already settled; and the proposal showed how important the French court deemed the fact of actual settlement.

Thus the two allies of America were hostile to her interests. The open foe, England, on the contrary, was anxious to conclude a separate treaty, so that she might herself be in a better condition to carry on negotiations with France and Spain; she cared much less to keep the West than she did to keep Gibraltar, and an agreement with the United States about the former left her free to insist on the retention of the latter. Congress, in a spirit of slavish subserviency, had instructed the American commissioners to take no steps without the knowl-

edge and advice of France. Franklin was inclined to obey these instructions; but Jay, supported by Adams, boldly insisted on disregarding them; and, accordingly, a separate treaty was negotiated with England. In settling the claims to the western territory, much stress was laid on the old colonial charters; but underneath all the verbiage it was practically admitted that these charters conferred merely inchoate rights, which became complete only after conquest and settlement. The States themselves had already by their actions shown that they admitted this to be the case. Thus North Carolina, when by the creation of Washington County—now the State of Tennessee—she rounded out her boundaries, specified them as running to the Mississippi. As a matter of fact, the royal grant under which alone she could claim the land in question, extended to the Pacific; and the only difference between her rights to the regions east and west of the river was that her people were settling in one, and could not settle in the other. The same was true of Kentucky, and of the West generally; if the States could rightfully claim to run to the Mississippi, they could also rightfully claim to run to the Pacific. The colonial charters were all very well as furnishing color of title; but at bottom the American claim rested on the peculiar kind of colonizing conquest so successfully carried on by the backwoodsmen. When the English took New Amsterdam they claimed it under old charters; but they very well knew that their real right was only that of the strong hand. It was precisely so with the Americans

and the Ohio valley. They produced old charters to support their title; but in reality it rested on Clark's conquests and above all on the advance of the backwoods settlements.

This view of the case is amply confirmed by a consideration of what was actually acquired under the treaty of peace which closed the Revolutionary struggle. Map-makers down to the present day have almost invariably misrepresented the territorial limits we gained by this treaty. They represent our limits in the West in 1783 as being the Great Lakes, the Mississippi, and the 31st parallel of latitude from the Mississippi to the Chattahoochee; but in reality we did not acquire these limits until a dozen years later, by the treaties of Jay and Pinckney. Two points must be kept in mind: first, that during the war our ally, Spain, had conquered from England that portion of the Gulf coast known as West Florida; and, second, that when the treaty was made the United States and Great Britain mutually covenanted to do certain things, some of which were never done. Great Britain agreed to recognize the lakes as our northern boundary, but, on the alleged ground that we did not fulfill certain of our promises, she declined to fulfill this agreement, and the lake posts remained in her hands until the Jay treaty was ratified. She likewise consented to recognize the 31st parallel as our southern boundary, but, by a secret article, it was agreed that if by the negotiations she recovered West Florida, then the boundary should run about a hundred miles farther north, ending at the

mouth of the Yazoo. The discovery of this secret article aroused great indignation in Spain. As a matter of fact, the disputed territory, the land drained by the Gulf rivers, was not England's to grant, for it had been conquered and was then held by Spain. Nor was it given up to us until we acquired it by Pinckney's masterly diplomacy. The treaty represented a mere promise, which in part was not, and in part could not be, fulfilled. All that it really did was to guarantee us what we already possessed—that is, the Ohio valley and the Illinois, which we had settled and conquered during the years of warfare. Our boundary lines were in reality left very vague. On the north, the basin of the Great Lakes remained British; on the south, the lands draining into the Gulf remained Spanish, or under Spanish influence. The actual boundaries we acquired can be roughly stated, in the north, to have followed the divide between the waters of the lakes and the waters of the Ohio, and, in the south, to have run across the heads of the Gulf rivers. Had we remained a loose confederation, these boundaries would more probably have shrunk than advanced; we did not overleap them until some years after Washington had become the head of a real, not merely a titular, nation. The peace of 1783, as far as our western limits were affected, did nothing more than secure us undisturbed possession of lands from which it had proved impossible to oust us. We were in reality given nothing more than we had by our own prowess gained; the inference is strong that we got what we did get only because we had won and held it.



The first duty of the backwoodsmen who thus conquered the West was to institute civil government. Their efforts to overcome and beat back the Indians went hand-in-hand with their efforts to introduce law and order in the primitive communities they founded; and as exactly as they relied purely on themselves in withstanding outside foes, so they likewise built up their social life and their first systems of government with reference simply to their special needs, and without any outside help or direction. The whole character of the westward movement, the methods of warfare, of settlement and government, were determined by the extreme and defiant individualism of the backwoodsmen, their inborn independence and self-reliance, and their intensely democratic spirit. The West was won and settled by a number of groups of men, all acting independently of one another, but with a common object, and at about the same time. There was no one controlling spirit; it was essentially the movement of a whole free people, not of a single master-mind. There were strong and able leaders, who showed themselves fearless soldiers and just law-givers, undaunted by danger, resolute to persevere in the teeth of disaster; but even these leaders are most deeply interesting because they stand foremost among a host of others like them. There were hundreds of hunters and Indian fighters like Mansker, Wetzel, Kenton, and Brady; there were scores of commonwealth founders like Logan, Todd, Floyd, and Harrod; there were many adventurous land-speculators like Henderson; there were even plenty

of commanders like Shelby and Campbell. These were all men of mark; some of them exercised a powerful and honorable influence on the course of events in the West. Above them rise four greater figures, fit to be called not merely State or local, but national heroes. Clark, Sevier, Robertson, and Boone are emphatically American worthies. They were men of might in their day, born to sway the minds of others, helpful in shaping the destiny of the continent. Yet of Clark alone can it be said that he did a particular piece of work which without him would have remained undone. Sevier, Robertson, and Boone only hastened, and did more perfectly, a work which would have been done by others had they themselves fallen by the wayside. Important though they are for their own sakes, they are still more important as types of the men who surrounded them.

The individualism of the backwoodsmen, however, was tempered by a sound common sense, and capacity for combination. The first hunters might come alone or in couples, but the actual colonization was done not by individuals, but by groups of individuals. The settlers brought their families and belongings, either on pack-horses along the forest trails, or in scows down the streams; they settled in palisaded villages, and immediately took steps to provide both a civil and military organization. They were men of facts, not theories; and they showed their usual hard common sense in making a government. They did not try to invent a new system; they simply took that under

which they had grown up, and applied it to their altered conditions. They were most familiar with the government of the county; and therefore they adopted this for the framework of their little independent, self-governing commonwealths of Watauga, Cumberland, and Transylvania.

They were also familiar with the representative system; and accordingly they introduced it into the new communities, the little fortified villages serving as natural units of representation. They were already thoroughly democratic, in instinct and principle, and, as a matter of course, they made the offices elective and gave full play to the majority. In organizing the militia they kept the old system of county lieutenants, making them elective, not appointive; and they organized the men on the basis of a regiment, the companies representing territorial divisions, each commanded by its own officers, who were thus chosen by the fighting men of the fort or forts in their respective districts. Thus each of the backwoods commonwealths, during its short-lived term of absolute freedom, reproduced as its governmental system that of the old colonial county, increasing the powers of the court, and changing the justices into the elective representatives of an absolute democracy. The civil head, the chairman of the court or committee, was also usually the military head, the colonel-commandant. In fact, the military side of the organization rapidly became the most conspicuous and, at least, in certain crises, the most important. There were always some years of desperate warfare during

which the entire strength of the little commonwealth was drawn on to resist outside aggression, and during these years the chief function of government was to provide for the gripping military needs of the community, and the one pressing duty of its chief was to lead his followers with valor and wisdom in the struggle with the stranger.

These little communities were extremely independent in feeling, not only of the Federal Government, but of their parent States, and even of one another. They had won their positions by their own courage and hardihood; very few State troops and hardly a Continental soldier had appeared west of the Alleghanies. They had heartily sympathized with their several mother colonies when they became the United States, and had manfully played their part in the Revolutionary War. Moreover, they were united among themselves by ties of good-will and of services mutually rendered. Kentucky, for instance, had been succored more than once by troops raised among the Watauga Carolinians or the Holston Virginians, and in her turn she had sent needed supplies to the Cumberland. But when the strain of the war was over the separatist spirit asserted itself very strongly. The groups of western settlements not only looked on the Union itself very coldly, but they were also more or less actively hostile to their parent States, and regarded even one another as foreign communities; they considered the Confederation as being literally only a lax league of friendship.

Up to the close of the Revolutionary contest the

settlers who were building homes and States beyond the Alleghanies formed a homogeneous backwoods population. The woodchoppers, game-hunters, and Indian fighters, who dressed and lived alike, were the typical pioneers. They were a shifting people. In every settlement the tide ebbed and flowed. Some of the newcomers would be beaten in the hard struggle for existence, and would drift back to whence they had come. Of those who succeeded, some would take root in the land, and others would move still farther into the wilderness. Thus each generation rolled westward, leaving its children at the point where the wave stopped no less than at that where it started. The descendants of the victors of King's Mountain are as likely to be found in the Rockies as in the Alleghanies.

With the close of the war came an enormous increase in the tide of immigration; and many of the newcomers were of a very different stamp from their predecessors. The main current flowed towards Kentucky, and gave an entirely different character to its population. The two typical figures in Kentucky so far had been Clark and Boone, but after the close of the Revolution both of them sank into unimportance, whereas the careers of Sevier and Robertson had only begun. The disappearance of the two former from active life was partly accidental and partly a resultant of the forces that assimilated Kentucky so much more rapidly than Tennessee to the conditions prevailing in the old States. Kentucky was the best known and the most accessible of the western regions; within her own borders she was

now comparatively safe from serious Indian invasion, and the tide of immigration naturally flowed thither. So strong was the current that, within a dozen years, it had completely swamped the original settlers, and had changed Kentucky from a peculiar pioneer and backwoods commonwealth into a State differing no more from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina than these differed from one another.

The men who gave the tone to this great flood of newcomers were the gentry from the seacoast country, the planters, the young lawyers, the men of means who had been impoverished by the long-continued and harassing civil war. Straitened in circumstances, desirous of winning back wealth and position, they cast longing eyes towards the beautiful and fertile country beyond the mountains, deeming it a place that afforded unusual opportunities to the man with capital, no less than to him whose sole trust was in his own adventurous energy.

Most of the gentlefolk in Virginia and the Carolinas, the men who lived in great roomy houses on their well-stocked and slave-tilled plantations, had been forced to struggle hard to keep their heads above water during the Revolution. They loyally supported the government, with blood and money; and at the same time they endeavored to save some of their property from the general wreck, and to fittingly educate their girls, and those of their boys who were too young to be in the army. The men of this stamp who now prepared to cast in their lot with the new communities formed an

exceptionally valuable class of immigrants; they contributed the very qualities of which the raw settlements stood most in need. They had suffered for no fault of their own; fate had gone hard with them. The fathers had been in the Federal or Provincial congresses; the older sons had served in the Continental line or in the militia. The plantations were occasionally overrun by the enemy; and the general disorder had completed their ruin. Nevertheless, the heads of the families had striven to send the younger sons to school or college. For their daughters they did even more; and throughout the contest, even in its darkest hours, they sent them down to receive the final touches of a ladylike education at some one of the State capitals not at the moment in the hands of the enemy—such as Charleston or Philadelphia. There the young ladies were taught dancing and music, for which, as well as for their frocks and “pink calamanco shoes,” their fathers paid enormous sums in depreciated Continental currency.

Even the close of active hostilities, when the British were driven from the Southern States, brought at first but a slight betterment of condition to the struggling people. There was no cash in the land, the paper currency was nearly worthless, everyone was heavily in debt, and no one was able to collect what was owing to him. There was much mob violence, and a general relaxation of the bonds of law and order. Even nature turned hostile; a terrible drought shrunk up all the streams until they could not turn the grist-mills, while from the same cause the crops failed almost completely.

A hard winter followed, and many cattle and hogs died; so that the well-to-do were brought to the verge of bankruptcy and the poor suffered extreme privations, being forced to go fifty or sixty miles to purchase small quantities of meal and grain at exorbitant prices.

This distress at home inclined many people of means and ambition to try their fortunes in the West; while another and equally powerful motive was the desire to secure great tracts of virgin lands, for possession or speculation. Many distinguished soldiers had been rewarded by successive warrants for unoccupied land, which they entered wherever they chose, until they could claim thousands upon thousands of acres. Sometimes they sold these warrants to outsiders; but whether they remained in the hands of the original holders or not, they served as a great stimulus to the westward movement, and drew many of the representatives of the wealthiest and most influential families in the parent States to the lands on the farther side of the mountains.

At the close of the Revolution, however, the men from the seacoast region formed but an insignificant portion of the Western pioneers. The country beyond the Alleghanies was first won and settled by the backwoodsmen themselves, acting under their own leaders, obeying their own desires, and following their own methods. They were a marked and peculiar people. The good and evil traits in their character were such as naturally belonged to a strong, harsh, and homely race, which, with all its shortcomings, was nevertheless bringing a tremendous work to a triumphant conclusion. The



backwoodsmen were above all things characteristically American; and it is fitting that the two greatest and most typical of all Americans should have been respectively a sharer and an outcome of their work. Washington himself passed the most important years of his youth heading the westward movement of his people; clad in the traditional dress of the backwoodsmen, in tasselled hunting-shirt and fringed leggings, he led them to battle against the French and Indians, and helped to clear the way for the American advance. The only other man who, in the American roll of honor, stands by the side of Washington was born when the distinctive work of the pioneers had ended; and yet he was bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh; for from the loins of this gaunt frontier folk sprang mighty Abraham Lincoln.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE INRUSH OF SETTLERS, 1784-1787

**A**T the beginning of 1784 peace was a definite fact, and the United States had become one among the nations of the earth; a nation young and lusty in her youth, but as yet loosely knit, and formidable in promise rather than in actual capacity for performance.

On the western frontier lay vast and fertile vacant spaces; for the Americans had barely passed the threshold of the continent predestined to be the inheritance of their children and their children's children. For generations the great feature in the nation's history, next only to the preservation of its national life, was to be its westward growth; and its distinguishing work was to be the settlement of the immense wilderness which stretched across to the Pacific. But before the land could be settled it had to be won.

The valley of the Ohio already belonged to the Americans by right of conquest and of armed possession. North and south of the valley lay warlike and powerful Indian confederacies, now at last thoroughly alarmed and angered by the white advance; while behind these warrior tribes, urging them to hostility, and furnishing

them the weapons and means wherewith to fight, stood the representatives of two great European nations, both bitterly hostile to the new America. The Briton and the Spaniard opposed the American settler precisely as the Frenchman had done before them, in the interests of their own merchants and fur-traders.

All the ports around the Great Lakes were held by the British; their officers, military and civil, administering the government of the scattered French hamlets, and preserving their old-time relations with the Indian tribes, whom they continued to treat as allies. To the south and west the Spaniards played the same part, scornfully refusing to heed the boundary established to the southward by the treaty between England and the United States, alleging that the former had ceded what it did not possess. They claimed the land as theirs by right of conquest. The territory which they controlled stretched from Florida along a vaguely defined boundary to the Mississippi, up the east bank of the latter at least to the Chickasaw Bluffs, and thence up the west bank; while the Creeks and Choctaws were under their influence.

Thus there were foes, both white and red, to be overcome, either by force of arms or by diplomacy, before the northernmost and the southernmost portions of the wilderness lying on our western border could be thrown open to settlement.

With the ending of the Revolutionary War the rush of settlers to these western lands assumed striking proportions. All men who deemed that they could swim

in troubled waters were drawn towards the new country. The more turbulent and ambitious spirits saw roads to distinction in frontier warfare, politics, and diplomacy. Merchants dreamed of many fortunate ventures, in connection with the river trade or the overland commerce by pack-train. Lawyers not only expected to make their living by their proper calling, but also to rise to the first places in the commonwealths, for in these new communities, as in the older States, the law was then the most honored of the professions, and that which most surely led to high social and political standing. But the one great attraction for all classes was the chance of procuring large quantities of fertile land at low prices.

The great growth of the West took place in Kentucky. The Kentucky country was by far the most widely renowned for its fertility; it was much more accessible and more firmly held, and its government was on a more permanent footing than was the case in the Wabash, Illinois, and Cumberland regions. In consequence the majority of the men who went West to build homes fixed their eyes on the vigorous young community which lay south of the Ohio, and which already aspired to the honors of statehood.

The immigrants came into Kentucky in two streams, following two different routes—the Ohio River, and Boone's old Wilderness Trail. Those who came overland, along the latter road, were much fewer in number than those who came by water; and yet they were so numerous that the trail at times was almost thronged.

They struggled over the narrow, ill-made roads which led from the different back settlements, until they came to the last outposts of civilization east of the Cumberland Mountains; scattered block-houses, whose owners were by turns farmers, tavern-keepers, hunters, and Indian fighters. Here they usually waited until a sufficient number had gathered together to furnish a band of riflemen, and then set off to traverse by slow stages the mountains and vast forests which lay between them and the nearest Kentucky station. The time of the journey depended, of course, upon the composition of the traveling party, and upon the mishaps encountered; a party of young men on good horses might do it in three days, while a large band of immigrants, who were hampered by women, children, and cattle, and dogged by ill-luck, might take three weeks. Ordinarily six or eight days were sufficient. Even when undisturbed by Indians, the trip was accompanied by much fatigue and exposure; and, as always in frontier traveling, one of the perpetual annoyances was the necessity for hunting up strayed horses.

The chief highway, however, was the Ohio River; for to drift down stream in a scow was easier and quicker, and no more dangerous, than to plod through thick mountain forests. Moreover, it was much easier for the settler who went by water to carry with him his household goods and implements of husbandry, and even such cumbrous articles as wagons, or, if he was rich and ambitious, the lumber wherewith to build a frame house. All kinds of craft were used, even bark

canoes and pirogues, or dugouts; but the flat-bottomed scow with square ends was the ordinary means of conveyance. They were of all sizes. The passengers and their live stock were of course huddled together so as to take up as little room as possible. Sometimes the immigrants built or bought their own boat, navigated it themselves, and sold it or broke it up on reaching their destination. At other times they merely hired a passage. A few of the more enterprising boat owners speedily introduced a regular immigrant service, making trips at stated times from Pittsburg, and advertising the carriage capacity of their boats and the times of starting. The trip from Pittsburg to Louisville took a week or ten days; but in low water it might last a month.

The number of boats passing down the Ohio, laden with would-be settlers and their belongings, speedily became very great. An eye-witness stated that between November 13th and December 22d, of 1785, thirty-nine boats, with an average of ten persons in each, went down the Ohio to the Falls. As time went on, the number of immigrants increased until in the year ending in November, 1788, 967 boats, carrying 18,370 persons, with 7986 horses, 2372 cows, 1110 sheep, and 646 wagons, went down the Ohio.

There are no means of procuring similar figures for the number of immigrants who went over the Wilderness Road but probably there were not half as many as went down the Ohio. Perhaps from ten to twenty thousand people a year came into Kentucky during the period immediately succeeding the close of the Revolu-

tion; but the net gain to the population was much less, because there was always a smaller, but almost equally steady, counter-flow of men who, having failed as pioneers, were struggling wearily back toward their deserted eastern homes. In 1785 the population was estimated at from twenty to thirty thousand; and the leading towns, Louisville, Lexington, Harrodsburg, Boonsboro, St. Asaph's, were thriving little hamlets, with stores and horse grist-mills, and no longer mere clusters of stockaded cabins.

The newcomers were mainly Americans from all the States of the Union; but there were also a few people from nearly every country in Europe, and even from Asia. All alike prized the wild freedom and absence of restraint so essentially characteristic of their new life; a life in many ways very pleasant, but one which on the border of the Indian country sank into mere savagery.

In such a population there was of course much loosening of the bands, social, political, moral, and religious, which knit a society together. A great many of the restraints of their old life were thrown off, and there was much social adjustment and readjustment before their relations to one another under the new conditions became definitely settled. But there came early into the land many men of high purpose and pure life whose influence upon their fellows, though quiet, was very great.

Rough log schools were springing up everywhere, beside the rough log meeting houses, the same building

often serving for both purposes. The school teacher might be a young surveyor out of work for the moment, a New Englander fresh from some academy in the Northeast, an Irishman with a smattering of learning, or perhaps an English immigrant of the upper class, unfit for and broken down by the work of a new country. The boys and girls were taught together, and at recess played together—tag, pawns, and various kissing games. The rod was used unsparingly, for the elder boys proved boisterous pupils. A favorite mutinous frolic was to “bar out” the teacher, taking possession of the schoolhouse and holding it against the master with sticks and stones until he had either forced an entrance or agreed to the terms of the defenders. Sometimes this barring out represented a revolt against tyranny; often it was a conventional, and half-acquiesced-in, method of showing exuberance of spirit, just before the Christmas holidays. In most of the schools the teaching was necessarily of the simplest, for the only books might be a Testament, a primer, a spelling book, and a small arithmetic.

At this time one of the recently created Kentucky judges, an educated Virginian, in writing to his friend Madison, said: “We are as harmonious amongst ourselves as can be expected of a mixture of people from various States and of various Sentiments and Manners not yet assimilated. In point of Morals the bulk of the inhabitants are far superior to what I expected to find in any new settled country. We have not had a single instance of Murder, and but one Criminal for



Felony of any kind has yet been before the Supreme Court. I wish I could say as much to vindicate the character of our Land-jobbers. This Business has been attended with much villainy in other parts. Here it is reduced to a system, and to take the advantage of the ignorance or of the poverty of a neighbor is almost grown into reputation."

Of course, when the fever for land speculation raged so violently, many who had embarked too eagerly in the purchase of large tracts became land poor; Clark being among those who found that though they owned great reaches of fertile wild land they had no means whatever of getting money. In Kentucky, while much land was taken up under Treasury warrants, much was also allotted to the officers of the Continental army; and the retired officers of the Continental line were the best of all possible immigrants. A class of gentlefolks soon sprang up in the land, whose members were not so separated from other citizens as to be in any way alien to them, and who yet stood sufficiently above the mass to be recognized as the natural leaders, social and political, of their sturdy fellow-freemen. These men by degrees built themselves comfortable, roomy houses, and their lives were very pleasant; at a little later period Clark, having abandoned war and politics, describes himself as living a retired life with, as his chief amusements, reading, hunting, fishing, fowling, and corresponding with a few chosen friends.

The gentry offered to strangers the usual open-handed hospitality characteristic of the frontier, with

much more than the average frontier refinement; a hospitality, moreover, which was never marred or interfered with by the frontier suspiciousness of strangers which sometimes made the humbler people of the border seem churlish to travelers. When Federal garrisons were established along the Ohio, the officers were largely dependent for their social pleasures on the gentlefolks of the neighborhood. One of them in his journal mentions being entertained by Clark at "a very elegant dinner," a number of gentlemen being present. The officers in turn sometimes gave dances in the forts, or attended the great barbecues to which the people rode from far and near. At such a barbecue an ox or a sheep, a bear, an elk, or a deer, was split in two and roasted over the coals; dinner was eaten under the trees; and there was every kind of amusement from horse-racing to dancing.

Besides raising more than enough flour and beef to keep themselves in plenty, the settlers turned their attention to many other forms of produce. There were many thriving orchards; while tobacco cultivation was becoming of much importance. Great droves of hogs and flocks of sheep flourished in every locality whence the bears and wolves had been driven; the hogs running free in the woods with the branded cattle and horses. Except in the most densely settled parts much of the beef was still obtained from buffaloes, and much of the bacon from bears. Venison was a staple commodity. The fur trade, largely carried on by French trappers, was still of great importance in Kentucky and

**Tennessee.** North of the Ohio it was the attraction which tempted white men into the wilderness. Its profitable nature was the chief reason why the British persistently clung to the posts on the Lakes, and stirred up the Indians to keep the American settlers out of all lands that were tributary to the British fur merchants.

In addition to furs, quantities of ginseng were often carried to the eastern settlements at this period, when the commerce of the West was in its first infancy, and was as yet only struggling for an outlet down the Mississippi. One of those who went into this trade was Boone. Although no longer a real leader in Kentucky life he still occupied quite a prominent position and served as a Representative in the Virginia Legislature, while his fame as a hunter and explorer was now spread abroad in the United States, and even Europe. To travelers and newcomers generally, he was always pointed out as the first discoverer of Kentucky; and being modest, self-contained, and self-reliant he always impressed them favorably. He spent most of his time in hunting, trapping, and surveying land warrants for men of means, being paid, for instance, two shillings current money per acre for all the good land he could enter on a ten-thousand acre Treasury warrant. He also traded up and down the Ohio River, at various places, such as Point Pleasant and Limestone; and at times combined keeping a tavern with keeping a store.

Boone procured for his customers or for himself such articles as linen, cloth, flannel, corduroy, chintz, calico,









broadcloth, and velvet at prices varying, according to the quality, from three to thirty shillings a yard; and there was also evidently a ready market for "tea ware," knives and forks, scissors, buttons, nails, and all kinds of hardware. Furs and skins usually appear on the debit sides of the various accounts, ranging in value from the skin of a beaver worth eighteen shillings, or that of a bear worth ten, to those of deer, wolves, coons, wildcats, and foxes, costing two to four shillings apiece. Boone procured his goods from merchants in Hagerstown and Williamsport, in Maryland, whither he and his sons guided their own pack-trains, laden with peltries and with kegs of ginseng, and accompanied by droves of loose horses.

Boone's creed in matters of morality and religion was as simple and straightforward as his own character. Late in life he wrote to one of his kinsfolk: "All the religion I have is to love and fear God, believe in Jesus Christ, do all the good to my neighbors and myself that I can, and do as little harm as I can help, and trust on God's mercy for the rest." The old pioneer always kept the respect of red man and white, of friend and foe, for he acted according to his belief.

There was already a strong feeling in the western settlements against negro slavery, because of its moral evil, and of its inconsistency with all true standards of humanity and Christianity, a feeling which continued to exist and which later led to resolute efforts to forbid or abolish slave-holding. But the consciences of the majority were too dull, and, from the standpoint of the



white race, they were too shortsighted to take action in the right direction. The selfishness and mental obliquity which imperil the future of a race for the sake of the lazy pleasure of two or three generations prevailed; and in consequence the white people of the middle West, and therefore eventually of the Southwest, clutched the one burden under which they ever staggered, the one evil which has ever warped their development, the one danger which has ever seriously threatened their very existence.

## CHAPTER XVIII

THE STATE OF FRANKLIN, 1784-1788

**I**N Kentucky the old frontiersmen were losing their grip on the governmental machinery of the district. The great flood of immigration tended to swamp the pioneers; and the leading parts in the struggle for statehood were played by men who had come to the country about the close of the Revolutionary War, and who were often related by ties of kinship to the leaders of the Virginia legislatures and conventions.

On the waters of the upper Tennessee matters were entirely different. Immigration had been slower, and the people who did come in were usually of the type of those who had first built their stockaded hamlets on the banks of the Watauga. The leaders of the early pioneers were still the leaders of the community, in legislation as in warfare. Moreover North Carolina was a much weaker and more turbulent State than Virginia; it was very poor, and regarded the western settlements as mere burdensome sources of expense. In short, the settlers were left to themselves, to work out their own salvation as best they might, in peace or war; and as they bore most of the burdens of independence, they began to long for the privileges.

In June, 1784, the State Legislature passed an act ceding to the Continental Congress all the western lands; that is, all of what is now Tennessee. It was provided that the sovereignty of North Carolina over the ceded lands should continue in full effect until the United States accepted the gift; and that the act should lapse and become void unless Congress accepted within two years.

There was a general feeling in the Holston region that some step should be taken forthwith to prevent the whole district from lapsing into anarchy. The frontiersmen did not believe that Congress, hampered as it was and powerless to undertake new responsibilities could accept the gift until the two years were nearly gone; and meanwhile North Carolina would in all likelihood pay them little heed, so that they would be left a prey to the Indians without and to their own wrongdoers within.

The first step taken by the frontiersmen in the direction of setting up a new state was the election of deputies with full powers to a convention held at Jonesboro. Here some forty deputies met on August 23, 1784, and appointed John Sevier President. The delegates were unanimous that the counties represented should declare themselves independent of North Carolina, and passed a resolution to this effect. They also resolved that the three counties should form themselves into an Association, and should enforce all the laws of North Carolina not incompatible with beginning the career of a separate state, and that Congress should be

petitioned to countenance them, and advise them in the matter of their constitution. In addition, they made provision for admitting to their state the neighboring portions of Virginia, should they apply, and should the application be sanctioned by the State of Virginia, "or other power having cognizance thereof."

So far the convention had been unanimous; but a split came on the question whether their declaration of independence should take effect at once. The majority held that it should, and so voted; while a strong minority, amounting to one third of the members, followed the lead of John Tipton, and voted in the negative. During the session a crowd of people, partly from the straggling little frontier village itself, but partly from the neighboring country, had assembled, and were waiting in the street, to learn what the convention had decided. A member, stepping to the door of the building, announced the birth of the new state. The crowd, of course, believed in strong measures, and expressed its hearty approval. Soon afterwards the convention adjourned, after providing for the calling of a new convention, to consist of five delegates from each county, who should give a name to the state, and prepare for it a constitution.

When the convention did meet, in November, it broke up in confusion. At the same time North Carolina, becoming alarmed, repealed her cession act; and thereupon Sevier himself counseled his fellow-citizens to abandon the movement for a new state. However, they felt they had gone too far to back out. The con-

they had been promised. It further recited how North Carolina's original cession of the western lands had moved the Westerners to declare their independence, and contended that her subsequent repeal of the act making this cession was void, and that Congress should treat the cession as an accomplished fact. However, Congress took no action either for or against the insurrectionary commonwealth.

At the outset of its stormy career the new state had been named Franklin, in honor of Benjamin Franklin; but a large minority had wished to call it Frankland instead, and outsiders knew it as often by one title as the other. Benjamin Franklin himself did not know that it was named after him until it had been in existence eighteen months. The state was then in straits, and Franklin was appealed to in the hope of some advice or assistance. The prudent philosopher replied that this was the first time he had been informed that the new state was named after him, he having always supposed that it was called Frankland. He expressed his high appreciation of the honor conferred upon him, and his regret that he could not show his appreciation by anything more substantial than good wishes. He declined to commit himself as to the quarrel between Franklin and North Carolina, explaining that he could know nothing of its merits, as he had but just come home from abroad; but he warmly commended the proposition to submit the question to Congress, and urged that the disputants should abide by its decision.

In November, 1785, the convention to provide a per-

manent constitution for the state met at Greenville. There was already much discontent with the Franklin government. The differences between its adherents and those of the old North Carolina government were accentuated by bitter faction fights among the rivals for popular leadership, backed by their families and followers, the rivalry between Sevier and Tipton being pronounced, for Tipton was second in influence only to Sevier, and was his bitter personal enemy. At the convention a brand new constitution was submitted, and was urged for adoption by a strong minority. After a hot debate and some tumultuous scenes, it was rejected by the majority of the convention, and in its stead, on Sevier's motion, the North Carolina constitution was adopted as the groundwork for the new government.

The state of Franklin had now been in existence over a year, and during this period the officers holding under it had exercised complete control in the three counties. But in the spring of 1786, the discontent which had smoldered burst into flame. Tipton and his followers openly espoused the cause of North Carolina, and were joined, as time waned, by the men who for various reasons were dissatisfied with the results of the trial of independent statehood. They held elections, at the Sycamore Shoals and elsewhere, to choose representatives to the North Carolina Legislature, John Tipton being elected Senator. They organized the entire local government over again in the interest of the old State.

The two rival governments clashed in every way. County courts of both were held in the same counties; the militia were called out by both sets of officers; taxes were levied by both Legislatures. The Franklin courts were held at Jonesboro, the North Carolina courts at Buffalo, ten miles distant; and each court in turn was broken up by armed bands of the opposite party. Criminals thrived in the confusion, and the people refused to pay taxes to either party. Brawls, with their brutal accompaniments of gouging and biting, were common. Sevier and Tipton themselves, on one occasion when they by chance met, indulged in a rough-and-tumble fight before their friends could interfere.

During this time of confusion each party rallied by turns, but the general drift was all in favor of North Carolina. One by one the adherents of Franklin dropped away. The revolt was essentially a frontier revolt, and Sevier was essentially a frontier leader. The older and longer-settled counties and parts of counties were the first to fall away from him, while the settlers on the very edge of the Indian country clung to him to the last.

In 1787, the state of Franklin began to totter to its fall. In April Sevier, hungering for help or friendly advice, wrote again to Franklin. The old sage repeated that he knew too little of the circumstances to express an opinion, but he urged a friendly understanding with North Carolina, and he spoke with unpalatable frankness on the subject of the Indians. Prevent encroachments on Indian lands, Franklin wrote to Sevier,—Sevier, who, in a last effort to rally his followers, was

seeking a general Indian war to further these very encroachments,—and remember that they are the more unjustifiable because the Indians usually give good bargains in the way of purchase, while a war with them costs more than any possible price they may ask.

Sevier, also in the year 1787, carried on a long correspondence with Evan Shelby, whose adherence to the state of Franklin he much desired, as the stout old fellow was a power not only among the frontiersmen but with the Virginian and North Carolinian authorities likewise. Sevier persuaded the Legislature to offer Shelby the position of chief magistrate of Franklin, and pressed him to accept it, and throw in his lot with the Westerners, instead of trying to serve men at a distance.

But Shelby could neither be placated nor intimidated. He regarded with equal alarm and anger the loosening of the bands of authority and order among the Franklin frontiersmen. He bitterly disapproved of their lawless encroachments on the Indian lands, which he feared would cause a general war with the savages. At the very time that Sevier was writing to him, he was himself writing to the North Carolina government, urging them to send forward troops to put down the rebellion by force, and was requesting the Virginians to back up any such movement with their militia. However, no action was necessary. The Franklin government collapsed of itself, for in September, 1787, the Legislature met for the last time, at Greenville.

Sevier was left in dire straits by the falling of the



state he had founded; for not only were the North Carolina authorities naturally bitter against him, but he had to count on the personal hostility of Tipton. About the time that his term as Governor expired, a writ, issued by the North Carolina courts, was executed against his estate. The sheriff seized all his negro slaves, as they worked on his Nolichucky farm, and bore them for safe-keeping to Tipton's house. Sevier raised a hundred and fifty men and marched to take them back, carrying a light field piece. Tipton's friends gathered, thirty or forty strong, and a siege began. Sevier hesitated to push matters to extremity by charging home. For a couple of days there was some skirmishing and two or three men were killed or wounded. Then the county-lieutenant, with a hundred and eighty militia, came to Tipton's rescue. They surprised Sevier's camp at dawn on the last day of February, while the snow was falling heavily; and the Franklin men fled in panic, one or two being slain. Two of Sevier's sons were taken prisoners, and Tipton was with difficulty dissuaded from hanging them. This scrambling fight marked the ignoble end of the state of Franklin. Sevier fled to the uttermost part of the frontier, where no writs ran, and speedily became engaged in the Indian war.

A frontier leader and Indian fighter of note, Joseph Martin by name, who had dwelt much among the Indians, and had great influence over them, as he always treated them justly, had been appointed by North Carolina Brigadier-General of the Western

counties lying beyond the mountains. Martin's duties were not only to protect the border against Indian raids, but also to stamp out any smoldering embers of insurrection, and see that the laws of the State were again put in operation.

In April, 1788, he took command, and on the 24th of the month reached the lower settlements on the Holston River. Here he found that a couple of settlers had been killed by Indians a few days before, and he met a party of riflemen who had gathered to avenge the death of their friends by a foray on the Cherokee towns. Martin did not believe that the Cherokees were responsible for the murder, and he persuaded the angry whites to choose four of their trusted men to accompany him as ambassadors to the Cherokee towns in order to find out the truth.

Accordingly they all went forward together. Martin sent runners ahead to the Cherokees, and their chiefs and young warriors gathered to meet him. The Indians assured him that they were guiltless of the recent murder; that it should doubtless be laid at the door of some Creek war party. The Creeks, they said, kept passing through their villages to war on the whites, and they had often turned them back. The frontier envoys at this professed themselves satisfied, and returned to their homes, after begging Martin to stay among the Cherokees; and he stayed, his presence giving confidence to the Indians, who forthwith began to plant their crops.

Unfortunately, about the middle of May, the mur-

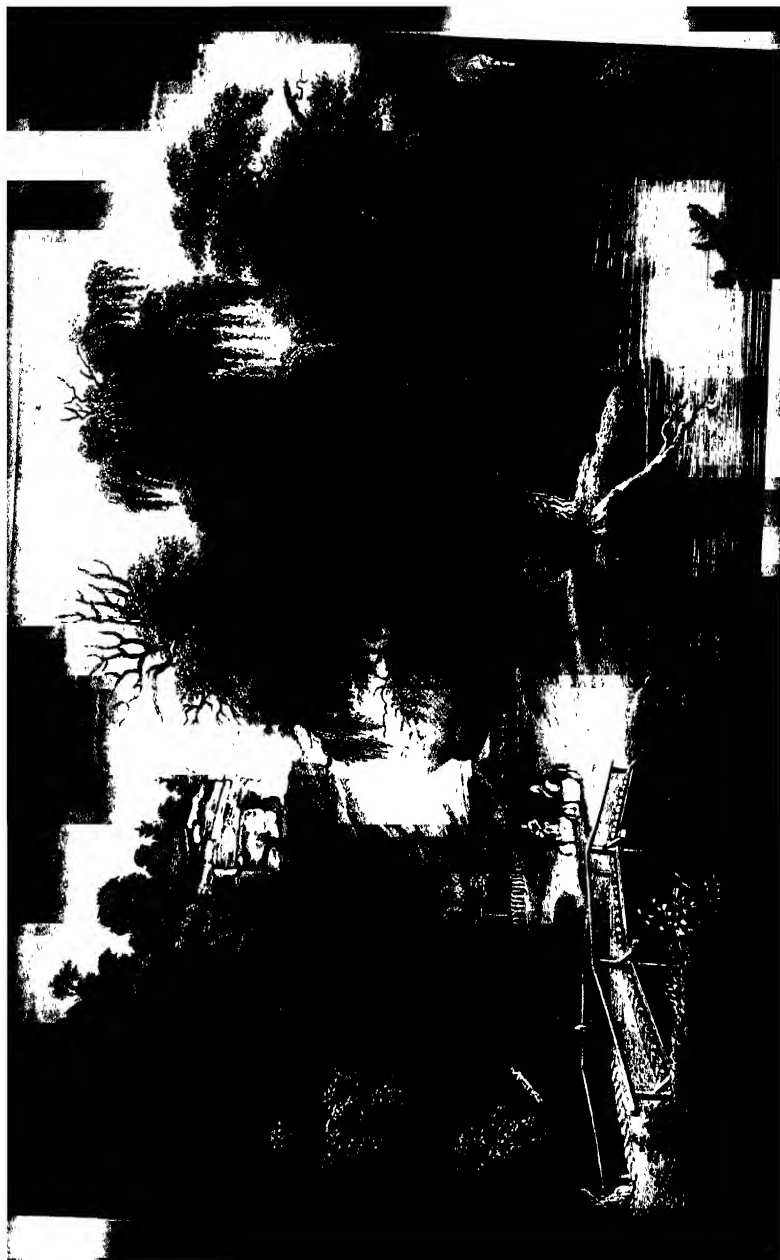
ders again began, and again parties of riflemen gathered for vengeance. Martin intercepted one of them ten miles from a friendly Cherokee town; but another attacked and burned a neighboring town, the inhabitants escaping with slight loss. The Cherokees, being incensed at the attack, threatened Martin at first. After awhile they cooled down, and explained to him that the outrages were the work of the Creeks and Chickamaugas, whom they could not control, and whom they hoped the whites would punish; but that they themselves were innocent and friendly. Then the whites sent messages to express their regret; and though Martin declined longer to be responsible for the deeds of men of his own color, the Indians consented to patch up another truce.

The outrages, however, continued; among others, a big boat was captured by the Chickamaugas, and all but three of the forty persons on board were killed. The settlers drew no fine distinctions between different Indians; they knew that their friends were being murdered by savages who came from the direction of the Cherokee towns; and they vented their wrath on the Indians who dwelt in these towns because they were nearest to hand.

On May 24th Martin left the Indian town of Chota, where he had been staying, and rode to the French Broad. There he found that a big levy of frontier militia, with Sevier at their head, were preparing to march against the Indians. Sevier, heedless of Martin's remonstrances, hurried forward on his raid, with









a hundred riders. He destroyed a town on the Hiawassee, killing a number of the warriors. This feat, and two or three others like it, made the frontiersmen flock to his standard; but before any great number were embodied under him, he headed a small party on a raid against a small town of Cherokees, who were well known to have been friendly to the whites. Here dwelt several chiefs, including old Corn Tassel, who for years had been foremost in the endeavor to keep the peace, and to prevent raids on the settlers. They put out a white flag; and the whites then hoisted one themselves. On the strength of this, one of the Indians crossed the river and ferried the whites over. Sevier put the Indians in a hut, and then a horrible deed of infamy was perpetrated; for he allowed these Cherokee chiefs to be brained with the tomahawk. Sevier's friends asserted that at the moment he was absent; but he knew well the fierce blood lust of his followers, and it was criminal negligence on his part to leave to their mercy the friendly Indians who had trusted to his good faith; and, moreover, he made no effort to punish the murder.

Even on the frontier, and at that time, the better class of backwoodsmen expressed much horror at the murder of the friendly chiefs. Sevier had planned to march against the Chickamaugas with the levies that were thronging to his banner; but the news of the murder provoked such discussion and hesitation that his forces melted away. Elsewhere throughout the country the news excited great indignation. The Con-



tinental Congress passed resolutions condemning acts which they had been powerless to prevent and were powerless to punish, and the Governor of North Carolina, as soon as he heard the news, ordered the arrest of Sevier and his associates.

As long as "Nolichucky Jack" remained on the border, among the rough Indian fighters whom he had so often led to victory, he was in no danger. But in the fall, late in October, he ventured back to the longer-settled districts. A council of officers, with Martin presiding and Tipton present as one of the leading members, had been held at Jonesboro, and had just broken up when Sevier and a dozen of his followers rode into the squalid little town. After much drinking and carousing, they all rode away; but when some miles out of town Sevier got into a quarrel, and after more drinking and brawling he went to pass the night at a house, the owner of which was his friend. Meanwhile one of the men with whom he had quarreled informed Tipton that his foe was in his grasp. Tipton gathered eight or ten men, and early next morning surprised Sevier in his lodgings.

Tipton captured Sevier, put him in irons, and sent him across the mountains to Morgantown, in North Carolina, where he was kindly treated and allowed much liberty. Meanwhile a dozen of his friends, with his two sons at their head, crossed the mountains to rescue their beloved leader. They came into Morgantown while court was sitting and went unnoticed in the crowds. In the evening, when the court adjourned

and the crowds broke up, Sevier's friends managed to get near him with a spare horse; he mounted and they all rode off at top speed. By daybreak they were out of danger. Nothing further was attempted against him. A year later he was elected a member of the North Carolina Legislature; after some hesitation he was allowed to take his seat, and the last trace of the old hostility disappeared.

The year before this, Congress had been much worked up over the discovery of a supposed movement in Franklin to organize for the armed conquest of Louisiana. The Secretary of War at once directed General Harmar to interfere, by force if necessary, with the execution of any such plan, and an officer of the regular army was sent to Franklin to find out the truth of the matter. This officer visited the Holston country in April, 1788, and after careful inquiry came to the conclusion that no movement against Spain was contemplated; the settlers being absorbed in the strife between the followers of Sevier and of Tipton.

The real danger for the moment lay, not in a movement by the backwoodsmen against Spain, but in a conspiracy of some of the backwoods leaders with the Spanish authorities. Just at this time the unrest in the West had taken the form, not of attempting the capture of Louisiana by force, but of obtaining concessions from the Spaniards in return for favors to be rendered them.

Sevier was in a mood to be helped and felt that with outside assistance he could yet win the day. But

when nothing came of his proposals, he suddenly became a Federalist and an advocate of a strong central government; and this, doubtless, not because of love for Federalism, but to show his hostility to North Carolina, which had at first refused to enter the new Union. Thus the last spark of independent life flickered out in Franklin proper.

## CHAPTER XIX

### KENTUCKY'S STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

1784-1790

**W**HILE the social condition of the communities on the Cumberland and the Tennessee had changed very slowly, in Kentucky the changes had been rapid. For when Col. William Fleming, an unusually competent observer, visited Kentucky on surveying business in the winter of 1779-80, he was much struck by the misery of the settlers. At the Falls they were sickly, suffering with fever and ague; many of the children were dying. Boonsboro and Harrodsburg were very dirty, the inhabitants were sickly, and the offal and dead beasts lay about, poisoning the air and the water. During the winter no more corn could be procured than was enough to furnish an occasional hoe-cake. The people sickened on a steady diet of buffalo-bull beef, cured in smoke without salt, and prepared for the table by boiling. There were then, Fleming estimated, about three thousand people in Kentucky.

But half a dozen years later all this was changed. The settlers had fairly swarmed into the Kentucky

country, and the population was so dense that the true frontiersmen, the real pioneers, were already wandering off to Illinois and elsewhere; every man of them desiring to live on his own land, by his own labor, and scorning to work for wages. The unexampled growth had wrought many changes; not the least was the way in which it lessened the importance of the first hunter-settlers and hunter-soldiers.

In all new-settled regions in the United States, so long as there was a frontier at all, the changes in the pioneer population proceeded in a certain definite order, and Kentucky furnished an example of the process. The hunter or trapper came first. Sometimes he combined with hunting and trapping the functions of an Indian trader, but ordinarily the American, as distinguished from the French or Spanish frontiersman, treated the Indian trade as something purely secondary to his more regular pursuits. Boone was a type of this class, and Boone's descendants went westward generation by generation until they reached the Pacific.

Close behind the mere hunter came the rude hunter-settler. He pastured his stock on the wild range, and lived largely by his skill with the rifle. He worked with simple tools and he did his work roughly. His squalid cabin was destitute of the commonest comforts; the blackened stumps and dead, girdled trees stood thick in his small and badly tilled field. He was adventurous, restless, shiftless, and he felt ill at ease and cramped by the presence of more industrious neighbors. As they pressed in round about him, he would sell his

claim, gather his cattle and his scanty store of tools and household goods, and again wander forth to seek uncleared land.

The third class consisted of the men who were thrifty, as well as adventurous, the men who were even more industrious than restless. These were they who entered in to hold the land, and who handed it on as an inheritance to their children and their children's children. They wished to find good land on which to build, and plant, and raise their big families of healthy children, and when they found such land they wished to make thereon their permanent homes. Though they first built cabins, as soon as might be they replaced them with substantial houses and barns. Though they at first girdled and burnt the standing timber, to clear the land, later they tilled it as carefully as any farmer of the seaboard States. They composed the bulk of the population, and formed the backbone and body of the State.

Yet a fourth class was composed of the men of means, of the well-to-do planters, merchants, and lawyers, of the men whose families already stood high on the Atlantic slope. Their inheritance of sturdy and self-reliant manhood helped them greatly; their blood told in their favor as blood generally does tell when other things are equal. If they prized intellect they prized character more; they were strong in body and mind, stout of heart, and resolute of will. They felt that pride of race which spurs a man to effort, instead of making him feel that he is excused from effort. They

realized that the qualities they inherited from their forefathers ought to be further developed by them as their forefathers had originally developed them. They knew that their blood and breeding, though making it probable that they would with proper effort succeed, yet entitled them to no success which they could not fairly earn in open contest with their rivals.

In spite of all the efforts of the Spanish officials the volume of trade on the Mississippi grew steadily. The fact that the river commerce thrived was partly the cause and partly the consequence of the general prosperity of Kentucky. The pioneer days, with their fierce and squalid struggle for bare life, were over. If men were willing to work, they were sure to succeed in earning a comfortable livelihood in a country so rich. Like all other successful and masterful people, the Kentuckians showed by their actions their practical knowledge of the truth that no race can ever hold its own unless its members are able and willing to work hard with their hands.

The general prosperity meant rude comfort everywhere; and it meant a good deal more than rude comfort for the men of greatest ability. By the time the river commerce had become really considerable, the rich merchants, planters, and lawyers had begun to build two-story houses of brick or stone, like those in which they had lived in Virginia. They were very fond of fishing, shooting, and riding, and were lavishly hospitable. They sought to have their children well taught, not only in letters but in social accomplish-











ments, like dancing; and at the proper season they liked to visit the Virginian watering-places, where they met "genteel company" from the older States, and lodged in good taverns in which "a man could have a room and a bed to himself."

One man, who would naturally have played a prominent part in Kentucky politics, failed to do so from a variety of causes. This was George Rogers Clark. He was by preference a military rather than a civil leader; he belonged by choice and habit to the class of pioneers and Indian fighters whose influence was waning; his remarkable successes had excited much envy and jealousy, while his subsequent failure had aroused contempt. He drew himself to one side, though he chafed at the need, and in his private letters he spoke with bitterness of the "big little men," the ambitious nobodies, whose jealousy had prompted them to destroy him by ten thousand lies; and, making a virtue of necessity, he plumed himself on the fact that he did not meddle with politics.

Benjamin Logan, who was senior colonel and county lieutenant of the District of Kentucky, stood second to Clark in the estimation of the early settlers, the men who, riding their own horses and carrying their own rifles, had so often followed both commanders on their swift raids against the Indian towns. Logan naturally took the lead in the first serious movement to make Kentucky an independent State.

In 1784, fear of a formidable Indian invasion became general in Kentucky, and in the fall Logan summoned

a meeting of the field officers to discuss the danger and to provide against it. When the officers gathered and tried to evolve some plan of operations, they found that they were helpless. They were merely the officers of one of the districts of Virginia; they could take no proper steps of their own motion, and Virginia was too far away and her interests had too little in common with theirs for the Virginian authorities to prove satisfactory substitutes for their own. No officials in Kentucky were authorized to order an expedition against the Indians, or to pay the militia who took part in it. Any expedition of the kind had to be wholly voluntary, and could of course only be undertaken under the strain of a great emergency. Confronted by such a condition of affairs, the militia officers issued a circular letter to the people of the district, recommending that on December 24, 1784, a convention should be held at Danville further to consider the subject, and that this convention should consist of delegates elected one from each militia company.

The recommendation was well received by the people of the district; and on the appointed date the convention met at Danville. Col. William Fleming, the old Indian fighter and surveyor, was again visiting Kentucky, and he was chosen President of the convention. After some discussion the members concluded that, while some of the disadvantages under which they labored could be remedied by the action of the Virginia Legislature, the real trouble was deep rooted, and could only be met by separation from Virginia and the

erection of Kentucky into a State. There was, however, much opposition to this plan, and the convention wisely decided to dissolve, after recommending to the people to elect, by counties, members who should meet in convention at Danville in May for the express purpose of deciding on the question of addressing to the Virginia Assembly a request for separation.

The convention, which met at Danville, in May, 1785, decided unanimously that it was desirable to separate, by constitutional methods, from Virginia, and to secure admission as a separate State into the Federal Union. Accordingly, it directed the preparation of a petition to this effect, to be sent to the Virginia Legislature, and prepared an address to the people in favor of the proposed course of action. Then instead of acting on its own responsibility, as it had both the right and power to do, the convention decided that the issuing of the address, and the ratification of its own actions generally, should be submitted to another convention, which was summoned to meet at the same place in August of the same year.

In the August convention James Wilkinson sat as a member, and he succeeded in committing his colleagues to a more radical course of action than that of the preceding convention. The resolutions they forwarded to the Virginia Legislature, asked the immediate erection of Kentucky into an independent State, and expressed the conviction that the new commonwealth would undoubtedly be admitted into the Union. This, of course, meant that Kentucky would first become a

power outside and independent of the Union; and no provision was made for entry into the Union beyond the expression of a hopeful belief that it would be allowed.

But when Virginia, with great propriety, made the acquiescence of Congress a condition precedent for the formation of the new State, Wilkinson immediately denounced this condition and demanded that Kentucky declare herself an independent State forthwith, no matter what Congress or Virginia might say. All the disorderly, unthinking, and separatist elements followed his lead. But the most enlightened and far-seeing men of the district were alarmed at the outlook; and a vigorous campaign in favor of orderly action was begun, under the lead of men like the Marshalls. These men were themselves uncompromisingly in favor of statehood for Kentucky; but they insisted that it should come in an orderly way, and not by a silly and needless revolution, which could serve no good purpose and was certain to entail much disorder and suffering upon the community. They insisted, furthermore, that there should be no room for doubt in regard to the new State's entering the Union.

When the time (September, 1787) came for holding the new convention that had been ordered by Virginia, Clark and Logan were making their raids against the Shawnees and the Wabash Indians. So many members-elect were absent in command of their respective militia companies that the convention merely met to adjourn, no quorum to transact business being

obtained until January, 1787. The convention then sent to the Virginia Legislature explaining the reason for the delay, and requesting that the terms of the act of separation already passed should be changed to suit the new conditions.

Virginia had so far acted wisely; but now her Legislature passed a new act, providing for another convention, to be held in August, 1787, the separation from Virginia only to be consummated if Congress, prior to July 4, 1788, should agree to the erection of the State and provide for its admission to the Union. When news of this act, with its requirement of needless and tedious delay, reached the Kentucky convention, it adjourned for good, with much chagrin.

Wilkinson and the other separatist leaders took advantage of this very natural chagrin to inflame the minds of the people against both Virginia and Congress. It was at this time that the Westerners became deeply stirred by exaggerated reports of the willingness of Congress to yield the right to navigate the Mississippi; and the separatist chiefs fanned their discontent by painting the danger as real and imminent, although they must speedily have learned that it had already ceased to exist.

However, at this time Wilkinson started on his first trading voyage to New Orleans, and the district was freed from his very undesirable presence. He was the mainspring of the movement in favor of lawless separation; for the furtive, restless, unscrupulous man had a talent for intrigue which rendered him dangerous at



a crisis of such a kind. In his absence the feeling cooled. The convention met in September, 1787, and acted with order and propriety, passing an act which provided for statehood upon the terms and conditions laid down by Virginia. Both Virginia and the Continental Congress were notified of the action taken.

With Wilkinson's return to Kentucky, after his successful trading trip to New Orleans and fresh from plotting with the Spanish officials, the disunion agitation once more took formidable form. The news of his success excited the cupidity of every mercantile adventurer, and the whole district became inflamed with desire to reap the benefits of the rich river-trade; and naturally the people formed the most exaggerated estimate of what these benefits would be. Chafing at the way the restrictions imposed by the Spanish officials hampered their commerce, the people were readily led by Wilkinson and his associates to consider the Federal authorities as somehow to blame because these restrictions were not removed.

The discontent was much increased by the growing fury of the Indian ravages. There had been a lull in the murderous woodland warfare during the years immediately succeeding the close of the Revolution, but the storm had again gathered. The hostility of the savages had grown steadily. By the summer of 1787, the Kentucky frontier was suffering much. In their anger the Kentuckians denounced the Federal Government for not aiding them, the men who were loudest in their denunciations being the very men who were most

strenuously bent on refusing to adopt the new Constitution, which alone could give the National Government the power to act effectually in the interest of the people.

While the spirit of unrest and discontent was high, the question of ratifying or rejecting this new Federal Constitution came up for decision. The Wilkinson party, and all the men who believed in a weak central government, or who wished the Federal tie dissolved outright, were, of course, violently opposed to ratification. Many weak or short-sighted men, and the doctrinaires and theorists—most of the members of the Danville political club, for instance—announced that they wished to ratify the Constitution, but only after it had been amended. As such prior amendment was impossible, this amounted merely to playing into the hands of the separatists; and the men who followed it were responsible for the by no means creditable fact that most of the Kentucky members in the Virginia convention voted against ratification.

Another irritating delay in the march toward statehood now occurred. In June, 1788, the Continental Congress declared that it was expedient to erect Kentucky into a State. But immediately afterwards news came that the Constitution had been ratified by the necessary nine States, and that the new government was, therefore, practically in being. This meant the dissolution of the old Confederation, and Congress thereupon very wisely refused to act further in the matter. Unfortunately Brown, who was the Kentucky delegate in Congress, was one of the separatist leaders.

He wrote home an account of the matter, in which he painted the refusal as due to the jealousy felt by the East for the West. As a matter of fact the delegates from all the States, except Virginia, had concurred in the action taken. Brown suppressed this fact, and used language carefully calculated to render the Kentuckians hostile to the Union.

Naturally all this gave an impetus to the separatist movement. The district held two conventions, in July and again in November, during the year 1788; and in both of them the separatist leaders made determined efforts to have Kentucky forthwith erect herself into an independent State. In uttering their opinions and desires they used vague language as to what they would do when once separated from Virginia.

It was in connection with these conventions that there appeared in August, 1787, the first newspaper ever printed in this new West, the West which lay no longer among the Alleghanies, but beyond them. It was a small weekly sheet called the *Kentucke Gazette*, the editor and publisher of which was John Bradford, who brought his printing press down the river on a flatboat; and some of the type were cut out of dogwood. In politics the paper sided with the separatists and clamored for revolutionary action by Kentucky.

The purpose of the extreme separatists to keep Kentucky out of the Union was defeated by the action of the fall convention of 1788, which settled definitely that Kentucky should become a State of the Union. All that remained was to decide on the precise terms of the

separation from Virginia. There was at first a hitch over these, the Virginia Legislature making terms to which the district convention of 1789 would not consent; but Virginia then yielded the points in dispute, and the Kentucky convention of 1790 provided for the admission of the State to the Union in 1792, and for holding a constitutional convention to decide upon the form of government, just before the admission.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY; OHIO

1787-1790

**A**T the close of the Revolutionary War there existed wide differences between the various States as to the actual ownership and possession of the lands they claimed beyond the mountains. Virginia and North Carolina were the only two who had reduced to some kind of occupation a large part of the territory to which they asserted title. Their backwoodsmen had settled in the lands so that they already held a certain population. Moreover, these same backwoodsmen, organized as part of the militia of the parent States, had made good their claim by successful warfare. The laws of the two States were executed by State officials in communities scattered over much of the country claimed. The soldier-settlers of Virginia and North Carolina had actually built houses and forts, tilled the soil, and exercised the functions of civil government, on the banks of the Wabash and the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee. Counties and districts had been erected by the two States on the western waters; and representatives of

the civil divisions thus constituted sat in the State Legislatures. The claims of Virginia and North Carolina to much of the territory had behind them the substantial element of armed possession.

Nothing of the sort could be said for the claims of the other States, for actual possession was not part of them. All the States that did not claim lands beyond the mountains were strenuous in belittling the claims of those that did, and insisted that the title to the western territory should be vested in the Union. Not even the danger from the British armies could keep this question in abeyance, and while the war was at its height the States were engaged in bitter wrangles over the subject. Maryland was the first to take action in the direction of nationalizing the western lands, and was the most determined in pressing the matter to a successful issue. She showed the greatest hesitation in joining the Confederation at all while the matter was allowed to rest unsettled; and insisted that the titles of the claimant States were void, that there was no need of asking them to cede what they did not possess, and that the West should be declared outright to be part of the Federal domain.

Maryland dreaded the mere growth of Virginia in wealth, power, and population in the first place; and in the second she feared lest her own population might be drained into these vacant lands, thereby at once diminishing her own, and building up her neighbor's importance. Each State, at that time, had to look upon its neighbors as probable commercial rivals and

possible armed enemies—a feeling which we now find difficulty in understanding.

New York's claim was the least defensible of all; but, on the other hand, New York led the way, in 1780, by abandoning all her claim to western lands in favor of the Union. Congress using this surrender as an argument by which to move the other States to action, issued an earnest appeal to them to follow New York's example without regard to the value of their titles, so that the Federal Union might be put on a firm basis; and announced that the policy of the Government would be to divide this new territory into districts of suitable size, which should be admitted as States as soon as they became well settled. This last proposition was important, as it outlined the future policy of the Government, which was to admit the new communities as States, with all the rights of the old States, instead of treating them as subordinate and dependent, after the manner of the European colonial systems.

Not until then did Maryland join the Confederation; but for some time no progress was made in the negotiations with the other States. Finally, early in 1784, Virginia ceded to Congress her rights to the territory northwest of the Ohio, except a certain amount retained as a military reserve for the use of her soldiers, while Congress tactily agreed not to question her right to Kentucky. A year later Massachusetts followed suit, and ceded to Congress her title to all lands lying west of the present western boundary of New York State. Finally, in 1786, a similar cession was made by Con-

necticut conditionally upon being allowed to reserve for her own profit about five thousand square miles in what is now northern Ohio—a tract afterwards known as the Western Reserve.

Thus the project for which Maryland had contended was at last realized, with the difference that Congress accepted the Northwest as a gift coupled with conditions, instead of taking it as an unconditional right. Having got possession of the land, Congress proceeded to arrange for its disposition, regarding the territory as a Treasury chest, and was anxious to sell the land in lots, whether to individuals or to companies. In 1785 it passed an ordinance of singular wisdom, which has been the basis of all our subsequent legislation on the subject. Congress provided for a corps of government surveyors, who were to go about their work systematically. It provided further for a known base line, and then for division of the country into ranges of townships six miles square, and for the subdivision of these townships into lots ("sections") of one square mile—six hundred and forty acres—each. The ranges, townships, and sections were duly numbered. The basis for the whole system of public education in the Northwest was laid by providing that in every township lot No. 16 should be reserved for the maintenance of public schools therein. A minimum price of a dollar an acre was put on the land.

Congress, however, was disappointed in its hope to find in these western lands a source of great wealth. The task of subduing the wilderness is not very remu-



nerative. It yields a little more than a livelihood to men of energy, resolution, and bodily strength; but it does not yield enough for men to be able to pay heavily for the privilege of undertaking the labor. Throughout our history the pioneer has found that by taking up wild land at a low cost he can make a rough living, and keep his family fed, clothed, and housed; but it is only by very hard work that he can lay anything by, or materially better his condition. Under such conditions a high price cannot be obtained for public lands; and when they are sold, as they must be, at a low price, the receipts do little more than offset the necessary outlay. The truth is that people have a very misty idea as to the worth of wild lands. All their value arises from the labor done on them or in their neighborhood, together with the amount of labor which must necessarily be expended in transportation. Such lands afford an opportunity of which advantage can be taken only at the cost of much hardship and much grinding toil.

It remained for Congress to determine the conditions under which the settlers could enter the new land, and under which new States should spring up therein. The movement in this direction was successful, because, when it was made, it was pushed by a body of well-known men who were anxious to buy the lands that Congress was anxious to sell, but who would not buy them until they had some assurance that the governmental system under which they were to live would meet their ideas. This body was composed of New

Englishers, mostly veterans of the Revolutionary War, and led by officers who had stood well in the Continental army.

When, in the fall of 1783, the Continental army was disbanded, the war-worn soldiers, who had at last wrung victory from the reluctant years of defeat, found themselves fronting grim penury. Some were worn with wounds and sickness; all were poor and unpaid; and Congress had no means to pay them. Many among them felt that they had small chance to repair their broken fortunes, if they returned to the homes they had abandoned seven weary years before, when the guns of the minute-men first called them to battle.

These heroes of the blue and buff turned their eyes westward to the fertile lands lying beyond the mountains. They petitioned Congress to mark out a Territory, in what is now the State of Ohio, as the seat of a distinct colony, in time to become one of the confederated States; and they asked that their bounty lands should be set off for them in this territory. Two hundred and eighty-five officers of the Continental line joined in this petition; one hundred and fifty-five, over half, were from Massachusetts, the State which had furnished more troops than any other to the Revolutionary armies. The remainder were from Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Maryland.

The signers of this petition desired to change the paper obligations of Congress, which they held, into fertile wild lands which they should themselves subdue by their labor; and out of these wild lands they pro-

posed to make a new State. Finally, in the early spring of 1786, some of the New England officers met at the "Bunch of Grapes" tavern in Boston, and organized the Ohio Company of Associates. They at once sent one of their number as a delegate to New York, where the Continental Congress was in session, to lay their memorial before that body.

Congress was considering an ordinance for the government of the Northwest, when the memorial was presented, and the former was delayed until the latter could be considered by the committee to which it had been referred. In July, Dr. Manasseh Cutler, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, arrived as a second delegate to look after the interests of the company.

The one point of difficulty was the slavery question. Only eight States were at the time represented in the Congress; these were Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia—thus five of the eight States were Southern. But the Federal Congress rose in this, almost its last act, to a lofty pitch of patriotism; and the Southern States showed a marked absence of sectional feeling in the matter. The committee that brought in the ordinance, the majority being Southern men, also reported an article prohibiting slavery; and the report was vigorously pushed by the two Virginians on the committee, William Grayson and Richard Henry Lee. The article was adopted by a vote unanimous, except for the dissent of one delegate, a nobody from New York.

The ordinance established a territorial government, with a governor, secretary, and judges. A General Assembly was authorized as soon as there should be five thousand free male inhabitants in the district. The lower house was elective, the upper house, or council, was appointive. The Legislature was to elect a territorial delegate to Congress. The governor was required to own a freehold of one thousand acres in the district, a judge five hundred, and a representative two hundred; and no man was allowed to vote unless he possessed a freehold of fifty acres. These provisions would seem strangely undemocratic if applied to a similar Territory in our own day.

The all-important features of the ordinance were contained in the six articles of compact between the confederated States and the people and States of the Territory, to be forever unalterable, save by the consent of both parties. The first guaranteed complete freedom of worship and religious belief to all peaceable and orderly persons. The second provided for trial by jury, the writ of habeas corpus, the privileges of the common law, and the right of proportional legislative representation. The third enjoined that faith should be kept with the Indians, and provided that "schools and the means of education" should forever be encouraged, inasmuch as "religion, morality, and knowledge" were necessary to good government. The fourth ordained that the new States formed in the Northwest should forever form part of the United States, and be subject to the laws, as were the others. The fifth provided for

the formation and admission of not less than three nor more than five States, formed out of this Northwestern Territory, whenever such a putative State should contain sixty thousand inhabitants; the form of government to be republican, and the State, when created, to stand on an equal footing with all the other States.

The sixth and most important article declared that there should never be slavery or involuntary servitude in the Northwest, otherwise than for the punishment of convicted criminals, provided, however, that fugitive slaves from the older States might lawfully be reclaimed by their owners. This was the greatest blow struck for freedom and against slavery in all our history, save only Lincoln's emancipation proclamation, for it determined that in the final struggle the mighty West should side with the right against the wrong. It was in its results a deadly stroke against the traffic in and ownership of human beings, and the blow was dealt by Southern men, to whom all honor should ever be given.

In one respect the ordinance marked a new departure of the most radical kind. The adoption of the policy therein outlined has worked a complete revolution in the way of looking at new communities formed by colonization from the parent country. Yet the very completeness of this revolution to a certain extent veils from us its importance. The Ordinance of 1787 decreed that the new States should stand in every respect on an equal footing with the old; and yet should be individually bound together with them. This was something entirely new in the history of colonization. Hitherto

every new colony had either been subject to the parent state, or independent of it. England, Holland, France, and Spain, when they founded colonies beyond the sea, founded them for the good of the parent state, and governed them as dependencies. The home country might treat her colonies well or ill, she might cherish and guard them, or oppress them with harshness and severity, but she never treated them as equals.

The American Republic, taking advantage of its fortunate Federal features and of its strong central government, boldly struck out on a new path. New States were created, which stood on exactly the same footing as the old; and yet these new States formed integral and inseparable parts of a great and rapidly growing nation. The movement was original with the American Republic; she was dealing with new conditions, and on this point the history of England merely taught her what to avoid.

The vital feature of the ordinance was the prohibition of slavery, which was brought about by the action of the Ohio Company. Without the prohibition the company would probably not have undertaken its experiment in colonization; and save for the pressure of the company, slavery would hardly have been abolished. Congress wished to sell the lands, and was much impressed by the solid worth of the founders of the association. The New Englanders were anxious to buy the lands, but were earnest in their determination to exclude slavery from the new Territory. The slave question was not at the time a burning issue between

North and South; for no Northerner thought of crusading to destroy the evil, while most enlightened Southerners were fond of planning how to do away with it. The tact of the company's representative before Congress, Dr. Cutler, did the rest.

A fortnight after the passage of the ordinance, the transaction was completed by the sale of a million and a half acres, north of the Ohio, to the Ohio Company. The price was nominally seventy cents an acre; but as payment was made in depreciated public securities, the real price was only eight or nine cents an acre.

The company was well organized, the founders showing the invaluable New England aptitude for business, and there was no delay in getting the settlement started. After some deliberation the lands lying along the Ohio, on both sides of, but mainly below, the Muskingum, were chosen for the site of the new colony.

In January and February, 1788, the new settlers began to reach the banks of the Youghiogeny, and set about building boats to launch when the river opened. There were forty-eight settlers in all who started down stream, their leader being General Rufus Putnam. He was a tried and gallant officer, who had served with honor not only in the Revolutionary armies, but in the war which crushed the French power in America. On April 7, 1788, he stepped from his boat, which he had very appropriately named the *Mayflower*, onto the bank of the Muskingum. The settlers immediately set to work felling trees, building log houses and a stockade, clearing fields, and laying out the ground-plan of

Marietta; for they christened the new town after the French Queen, Marie Antoinette.

The new settlers were almost all soldiers of the Revolutionary armies; they were hardworking, orderly men of trained courage and of keen intellect. An outside observer speaks of them as being the best informed, the most courteous and industrious, and the most law-abiding of all the settlers who had come to the frontier, while their leaders were men of a higher type than was elsewhere to be found in the West. No better material for founding a new State existed anywhere. With such a foundation the State was little likely to plunge into the perilous abysses of anarchic license or of separatism and disunion. Moreover, to plant a settlement of this kind on the edge of the Indian-haunted wilderness showed that the founders possessed both hardihood and resolution.

Rufus Putnam and his fellow New Englanders built their new town under the guns of a Federal fort, only just beyond the existing boundary of settlement, and on land guaranteed them by the Federal Government. The dangers they ran and the hardships they suffered in no wise approached those undergone and overcome by the iron-willed, iron-limbed hunters who first built their lonely cabins on the Cumberland and Kentucky.

In the summer of 1788 Dr. Manasseh Cutler visited the colony he had helped to found, and kept a diary of his journey. His trip through Pennsylvania was marked merely by such incidents as were common at that time on every journey in the United States away



from the larger towns. He traveled with various companions, stopping at taverns and private houses; and both guests and hosts were fond of trying their skill with the rifle, either at a mark or at squirrels. In mid-August he reached Coxe's fort on the Ohio, and came for the first time to the frontier proper. Here he embarked on a big flatboat with forty-eight others, besides cattle. They drifted and paddled down stream, and on the evening of the second day reached Muskingum.

The next three weeks he passed very comfortably with his friends, taking part in the various social entertainments, walking through the woods, and visiting one or two camps of friendly Indians with all the curiosity of a pleasure-tourist. Then, bringing his visit to a close, within a month he was back at his starting-point, well pleased with the industry and prospects of the settlers.

In the fall of 1787, another purchase of public lands was negotiated, by the Miami Company. The chief personage in this company was John Cleves Symmes, one of the first judges of the Northwestern Territory. Rights were acquired to take up one million acres, and under these rights three small settlements were made towards the close of the year 1788. One of them was chosen by St. Clair, the first governor, to be the seat of government. This little town had been called Losantiville in its infancy, but St. Clair re-christened it Cincinnati, in honor of the Society of the officers of the Continental army.

The men who formed these Miami Company colonies came largely from the Middle States. Like the founders of Marietta, very many of them, if not most, had served in the Continental army. They were good settlers; they made good material out of which to build up a great State.' Their movement was modeled on that of Putnam and his associates. Civil government was speedily organized. St. Clair and the judges formed the first legislature; in theory they were permitted to adopt laws already in existence in the old States, but as a matter of fact they tried any legislative experiment they saw fit.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT, 1791

THE Federal troops were camped in the Federal territory north of the Ohio. They garrisoned the forts and patrolled between the little log towns. They were commanded by the Federal General Harmar, and the territory was ruled by the Federal Governor St. Clair. Thenceforth the national authorities and the regular troops played the chief parts in the struggle for the Northwest. The frontier militia became a mere adjunct—often necessary, but always untrustworthy—of the regular forces.

By 1787, the Indian war had begun with all its old fury. The thickly settled districts were not much troubled, and the towns which, like Marietta in the following year, grew up under the shadow of a Federal fort, were comparatively safe. But the frontier of Kentucky, and of Virginia proper along the Ohio, suffered severely. There was great scarcity of powder and lead, and even of guns, and there was difficulty in procuring provisions for those militia who consented to leave their work and turn out when summoned. The settlers were harried, and the surveyors feared to go out to their work on the range.









The Federal authorities were still hopelessly endeavoring to come to some understanding with the Indians; they were holding treaties with some of the tribes, sending addresses and making speeches to others, and keeping envoys in the neighborhood of Detroit. These envoys watched the Indians who were there, and tried to influence the great gatherings of different tribes who came together at Sandusky to consult as to the white advance.

All the while the ravages grew steadily more severe. The Federal officers at the little widely scattered forts were at their wits' ends in trying to protect the outlying settlers and retaliate on the Indians; and as the latter grew bolder they menaced the forts themselves and harried the troops who convoyed provisions to them.

The subalterns in command of the little detachments which moved between the posts, whether they went by land or water, were forced to be ever on the watch against surprise and ambush. This was particularly the case with the garrison at Vincennes. The Wabash Indians were all the time out in parties to murder and plunder; and yet these same thieves and murderers were continually coming into town and strolling innocently about the fort; for it was impossible to tell the peaceful Indians from the hostile. They were ever in communication with the equally treacherous and ferocious Miami tribes, to whose towns the war parties often brought five or six scalps in a day, and prisoners, too, doomed to a death of awful torture at the stake.



By the summer of 1790, the raids of the Indians became unbearable. With great reluctance the National Government concluded that an effort to chastise the hostile savages could no longer be delayed; and those on the Maumee, or Miami of the Lakes, and on the Wabash, whose guilt had been peculiarly heinous, were singled out as the objects of attack.

The expedition against the Wabash towns was led by the Federal commander at Vincennes, Major Ham-tranck. No resistance was encountered; and after burning a few villages of bark huts and destroying some corn he returned to Vincennes.

The main expedition was that against the Miami Indians, and was led by General Harmar himself. It was arranged that there should be a nucleus of regular troops, but that the force should consist mainly of militia from Kentucky and Pennsylvania, the former furnishing twice as many as the latter. The troops were to gather on the 15th of September at Fort Washington, on the north bank of the Ohio, a day's journey down stream from Limestone.

At the appointed time the militia began to straggle in; the regular officers had long been busy getting their own troops, artillery, and military stores in readiness, and felt the utmost disappointment at the appearance of the militia. They numbered but few of the trained Indian fighters of the frontier; many of them were hired substitutes; most of them were entirely unacquainted with Indian warfare and were new to the life of the wilderness. In point of numbers the force

was amply sufficient for its work. But the militia, who composed four fifths of the force, were worthless.

A fortnight's halting progress through the wilderness brought the army to a small branch of the Miami of the Lakes. Here a horse patrol captured a Maumee Indian, who informed his captors that the Indians knew of their approach and were leaving their towns. On hearing this an effort was made to hurry forward; but when the army reached the Miami towns, on October 17th, they had been deserted. They stood at the junction of two branches of the Miami, the St. Mary's and the St. Joseph, about one hundred and seventy miles from Fort Washington. The troops had marched about ten miles a day. The towns consisted of a couple of hundred wigwams, with some good log huts; and there were gardens, orchards, and immense fields of corn. All these the soldiers destroyed, and the militia loaded themselves with plunder.

Much angered by the incapacity of the colonel commanding the militia, Harmar gave the command to Col. John Hardin of Kentucky, who left the camp next morning with two hundred men, including thirty regulars. But the militia had turned sulky. They did not wish to go, and they began to desert and return to camp immediately after leaving it. At least half of them had thus left him, when he stumbled on a body of about one hundred Indians. The Indians advanced firing, and the militia fled with abject cowardice, many not even discharging their guns. The thirty regulars stood to their work, and about ten of the militia stayed

with them. This small detachment fought bravely, and was cut to pieces, but six or seven men escaping.

This defeat took the heart out of the militia and left them thoroughly demoralized. So after a couple of days were spent in destroying and ravaging, the return march to Fort Washington was begun. But Harmar wished to avenge his losses and to forestall any attempt of the Indians to harass his shaken and retreating forces. Accordingly that night he sent back against the towns a detachment of four hundred men, sixty of whom were regulars, and the rest picked militia. They were commanded by Major Wyllys, of the regulars. It was a capital mistake of Harmar's to send off a mere detachment on such a business. He should have taken a force composed of all his regulars and the best of the militia, and led it in person.

The detachment marched soon after midnight, and reached the Miami at daybreak on October 22d. It was divided into three columns, which marched a few hundred yards apart, and were supposed to keep in touch with one another. The middle column was led by Wyllys in person, and included the regulars and a few militia. The rest of the militia composed the flank columns and marched under their own officers.

Immediately after crossing the Miami, and reaching the neighborhood of the town, Indians were seen. The columns were out of touch, and both of those on the flanks pressed forward against small parties of braves, whom they drove before them up the St. Joseph. Heedless of the orders they had received, the militia

thus pressed forward, killing and scattering the small parties in their front and losing all connection with the middle column of regulars. Meanwhile the main body of the Indians gathered to assail this column, and overwhelmed it by numbers. The regulars fought well and died hard, but they were completely cut off, and most of them, including their commander, were slain. The survivors made their way back to the main army, and joined its slow retreat.

The net result was a mortifying failure. In all, the regulars had seventy-five men killed and three wounded, while the militia lost one hundred and eight killed or missing and twenty-eight wounded. The march back was very dreary; and the militia became so ungovernable that one time Harmar reduced them to order only by threatening to fire on them with the artillery.

During the months following this defeat the situation grew steadily worse, both along the Ohio and in the Southwest. The Georgians, and the settlers along the Tennessee and Cumberland, were harassed rather than seriously menaced by the Creek war parties; but in the north the more dangerous Indians of the Miami, the Wabash, and the Lakes gathered in bodies so large as fairly to deserve the name of armies. Moreover, the pressure of the white advance was far heavier in the north. The pioneers who settled in the Ohio basin were many times as numerous as those who settled on the lands west of the Oconee and north of the Cumberland, and were fed from States much more populous. The advance was stronger, the resistance more desper-

ate; naturally the open break occurred where the strain was most intense.

As all the Northwestern tribes were banded in open war, it was useless to let the conflict remain a succession of raids and counter-raids. Only a severe stroke, delivered by a formidable army, could cow the tribes. Accordingly preparations were made for a campaign with a mixed force of regulars, special levies, and militia; and St. Clair, already Governor of the Northwestern Territory, was put in command of the army as Major-General.

Before the army was ready the Federal Government was obliged to take other measures for the defense of the border. Small bodies of rangers were raised from the frontier militia for defense; and the Kentuckians were authorized to undertake two offensive expeditions against the Wabash Indians so as to prevent them from giving aid to the Miami tribes, whom St. Clair was to attack. Both expeditions were carried on by bands of mounted volunteers, such as had followed Clark on his various raids. In both expeditions the volunteers behaved well and committed no barbarous act. The Wabash Indians were cowed and disheartened by their punishment, and in consequence gave no aid to the Miami tribes; but beyond this the raids accomplished nothing, and brought no nearer the wished-for time of peace.

Meanwhile St. Clair was striving vainly to hasten the preparations for his own far more formidable task. There was much delay in forwarding him the men and

provisions and munitions. Congress hesitated and debated; the Secretary of War, hampered by a newly created office and insufficient means, did not show to advantage in organizing the campaign, and was slow in carrying out his plans; while the delays were so extraordinary that the troops did not make the final move from Fort Washington until mid-September.

St. Clair himself was broken in health; he was a sick, weak, elderly man, high-minded, and zealous to do his duty, but totally unfit for the terrible responsibilities of such an expedition against such foes. The troops were of wretched stuff. There were two small regiments of regular infantry, the rest of the army being composed of six-months' levies and of militia ordered out for this particular campaign. The pay was contemptible, each private being given three dollars a month; while the lieutenants received twenty-two, the captains thirty, and the colonels sixty dollars. Most of the recruits were hurried into a campaign against peculiarly formidable foes before they had acquired the rudiments of a soldier's training, or even understood what woodcraft meant. The officers were men of courage; but they were utterly untrained themselves, and had no time in which to train their men. Harmar had learned a bitter lesson the preceding year; he knew well what Indians could do, and what raw troops could not; and he insisted with emphasis that the only possible outcome to St. Clair's expedition was defeat.

As the raw troops straggled to Pittsburg they were shipped down the Ohio to Fort Washington; and St.

Clair made the headquarters of his army at a new fort some twenty-five miles northward, which he christened Fort Hamilton. During September the army slowly assembled; two small regiments of regulars, two of six-months' levies, a number of Kentucky militia, a few cavalry, and a couple of small batteries of light guns. After wearisome delays, due mainly to the utter inefficiency of the quartermaster and contractor, the start for the Indian towns was made on October the 4th. On October 13th a halt was made to build another little fort, christened in honor of Jefferson. There were further delays, caused by the wretched management of the commissariat department, and the march was not resumed until the 24th, the numerous sick being left in Fort Jefferson. Then the army once more stumbled northward through the wilderness.

There was Indian sign, old and new, all through the woods; and the scouts and stragglers occasionally interchanged shots with small parties of braves, and now and then lost a man, killed or captured. It was therefore certain that the savages knew every movement of the army, which, as it slowly neared the Miami towns, was putting itself within easy striking range of the most formidable Indian confederacy in the Northwest. The density of the forest was such that only the utmost watchfulness could prevent the foe from approaching within arm's length unperceived. It behooved St. Clair to be on his guard, and he had been warned by Washington, who had never forgotten the scenes of Braddock's defeat, of the danger of a surprise.

But St. Clair was broken down by the worry and by continued sickness; time and again it was doubtful whether he could so much as stay with the army. The second in command, Major-General Richard Butler, was also sick most of the time; and, like St. Clair, he possessed none of the qualities of leadership save courage. The whole burden fell on the Adjutant-General, Colonel Winthrop Sargent, an old Revolutionary soldier, who showed ability of a good order; yet in the actual arrangements for battle he was, of course, unable to remedy the blunders of his superiors.

St. Clair should have covered his front and flanks for miles around with scouting parties; but he rarely sent any out, and, thanks to letting the management of those who did go devolve on his subordinates, and to not having their reports made to him in person, he derived no benefit from what they saw. He had twenty Chickasaws with him; but he sent these off on an extended trip, lost touch of them entirely, and never saw them again until after the battle. He did not seem to realize that he was himself in danger of attack. When some fifty miles or so from the Miami towns, on the last day of October, sixty of the militia deserted; and he actually sent back after them one of his two regular regiments, thus weakening by one half the only trustworthy portion of his force.

On November 3d the army, now reduced by desertions to a total of about fourteen hundred men, camped on the eastern fork of the Wabash, high up, where it was but twenty yards wide. There was snow on the



ground and the little pools were skimmed with ice. The camp was on a narrow rise of ground, where the troops were cramped together, the artillery and most of the horse in the middle. On both flanks, and along most of the rear, the ground was low and wet. All around, the wintry woods lay in frozen silence. In front the militia were thrown across the creek, and nearly a quarter of a mile beyond the rest of the troops. Parties of Indians were seen during the afternoon, and they skulked around the lines at night, so that the sentinels frequently fired at them; yet neither St. Clair nor Butler took any adequate measures to ward off the impending blow.

Next morning the men were under arms, as usual, by dawn, St. Clair intending to throw up entrenchments and then make a forced march in light order against the Indian towns. But he was forestalled. Soon after sunrise, just as the men were dismissed from parade, a sudden assault was made upon the militia, who lay unprotected beyond the creek. The unexpectedness and fury of the onset, the heavy firing, and the appalling whoops and yells of the throngs of painted savages threw the militia in disorder. After a few moments' resistance they broke and fled in wild panic to the camp of the regulars, among whom they drove in a frightened herd, spreading dismay and confusion.

A furious battle followed. After the first onset the Indians fought in silence, no sound coming from them save the incessant rattle of their fire, as they crept from log to log, from tree to tree, ever closer and closer. The

soldiers stood in close order, in the open; their musketry and artillery fire made a tremendous noise, but did little damage to a foe they could hardly see. Now and then, through the hanging smoke, terrible figures flitted, painted black and red, the feathers of the hawk and eagle braided in their long scalp-locks; but save for these glimpses, the soldiers knew the presence of their somber enemy only from the fearful rapidity with which their comrades fell dead and wounded in the ranks.

The Indians fought with the utmost boldness and ferocity, and with the utmost skill and caution. Under cover of the smoke of the heavy but harmless fire from the army they came up so close that they shot the troops down as hunters slaughter a herd of standing buffalo. Watching their chance, they charged again and again with the tomahawk, gliding into close quarters while their bewildered foes were still blindly firing into the smoke-shrouded woods.

At first the army as a whole fought firmly. The officers behaved very well, cheering and encouraging their men; but they were the special targets of the Indians, and fell rapidly. St. Clair and Butler by their cool fearlessness in the hour of extreme peril made some amends for their shortcomings as commanders. St. Clair's clothes were pierced by eight bullets, but he was himself untouched. General Butler had his arm broken early in the fight, but he continued to walk to and fro along the line until he was mortally wounded, when he was carried to the middle of the camp, where

he sat propped up by knapsacks. Men and horses were falling around him at every moment.

Instead of being awed by the bellowing artillery, the Indians made the gunners a special object of attack. Man after man was picked off, until almost all were slain or disabled. The artillery was thus almost silenced, and the Indians, emboldened by success, swarmed forward and seized the guns, while at the same time a part of the left wing of the army began to shrink back. But the Indians were now on comparatively open ground, where the regulars could see them and get at them; and under St. Clair's own leadership the troops rushed fiercely at the savages, with fixed bayonets, and drove them back to cover. By this time the confusion and disorder were great; while from every hollow and grass patch, from behind every stump and tree and fallen log, the Indians continued their fire. Again and again the officers led forward the troops in bayonet charges; and at first the men followed them with a will. Each charge seemed for a moment to be successful, the Indians rising in swarms and running in headlong flight from the bayonets. The men, however, were too clumsy and ill-trained in forest warfare to overtake their fleet, half-naked antagonists. The latter, though they fled, came back as they pleased; and they were only visible when raised by a charge.

Among the packhorsemen were some who were accustomed to the use of the rifle and to life in the woods; and these fought well. One, named Benjamin

Van Cleve, kept a journal, in which he described what he saw of the fight. He had no gun, but five minutes after the firing began he saw a soldier near him with his arm swinging useless, and he borrowed the wounded man's musket and cartridges. The smoke had settled to within three feet of the ground, so he knelt, covering himself behind a tree, and only fired when he saw an Indian's head, or noticed one running from cover to cover. He fired away all his ammunition, and the bands of his musket flew off; he picked up another just as two levy officers ordered a charge, and followed the charging party at a run. By this time the battalions were broken, and only some thirty men followed the officers. The Indians fled before the bayonets until they reached a ravine, where they halted behind an impenetrable tangle of fallen logs. The soldiers also halted and were speedily swept away by the fire of the Indians, whom they could not reach; but Van Cleve, showing his skill as a woodsman, covered himself behind a small tree, and gave back shot for shot until all his ammunition was gone; then he ran at full speed back to camp. Here he found that the artillery had been taken and re-taken again and again. Stricken men lay in heaps everywhere, and the charging troops were once more driving the Indians across the creek in front of the camp.

No words can paint the hopelessness and horror of such a struggle as that in which the soldiers were engaged. They were hemmed in by foes who showed no mercy and whose blows they could in no way return.

For two hours or so the troops kept up a slowly lessening resistance; but by degrees their hearts failed. The wounded had been brought towards the middle of the lines, where the baggage and tents were, and an ever-growing proportion of unwounded men joined them. In vain the officers tried, by encouragement, by jeers, by blows, to drive them back to the fight. They were unnerved.

There was but one thing to do. If possible the remnant of the army must be saved, and it could only be saved by instant flight, even at the cost of abandoning the wounded. The broad road by which the army had advanced was the only line of retreat. The artillery had already been spiked and abandoned. On one of the few horses still left, St. Clair mounted. He gathered together those fragments of the different battalions which contained the men who still kept heart and head, and ordered them to charge and regain the road from which the savages had cut them off. Repeated orders were necessary before some of the men could be roused from their stupor sufficiently to follow the charging party; and they were only induced to move when told that it was to retreat.

At the head of the column, the coolest and boldest men drew up; and they fell on the Indians with such fury as to force them back well beyond the road. This made an opening through which, said Van Cleve, the packer, the rest of the troops "pressed like a drove of bullocks." The Indians were surprised by the vigor of the charge, and puzzled as to its object. They

opened out on both sides and half the men had gone through before they fired more than a chance shot or two. Then they fell on the rear, and began a hot pursuit. St. Clair sent his aide to the front to keep order, but neither he nor anyone else could check the flight. Major Clark tried to rally his battalion to cover the retreat, but he was killed and the effort abandoned.

There never was a wilder rout. As soon as the men began to run, and realized that in flight there lay some hope of safety, they broke into a stampede which soon became uncontrollable. Horses, soldiers, and the few camp followers and women who had accompanied the army were all mixed together. Neither command nor example had the slightest weight; the men were abandoned to the terrible selfishness of utter fear. They threw away their weapons as they ran. They thought of nothing but escape, and fled in a huddle, the stronger and the few who had horses trampling their way to the front through the old, the weak, and the wounded; while behind them raged the Indian tomahawk. St. Clair, himself, tried to stem the torrent of fugitives; but he failed, being swept forward by the crowd.

Among Van Cleve's fellow packers were his uncle and a young man named Bonham, who was his close and dear friend. The uncle was shot in the wrist, the ball lodging near his shoulder; but he escaped. Bonham, just before the retreat began, was shot through both hips, so that he could not walk. Young Van Cleve got him a horse, on which he was with difficulty

mounted; then, as the flight began, the two separated. Bonham rode until the pursuit had almost ceased; then, weak and crippled, he was thrown off his horse and slain. Meanwhile Van Cleve ran steadily on foot. By the time he had gone two miles most of the mounted men had passed him. A boy, on the point of falling from exhaustion, now begged his help; and the kind-hearted backwoodsman seized the lad and pulled him along nearly two miles farther, when he himself became so worn out that he nearly fell. There were still two horses in the rear, one carrying three men, and one two; and behind the latter Van Cleve, summoning his strength, threw the boy, who escaped. Nor did Van Cleve's pity for his fellows cease with this; for he stopped to tie his handkerchief around the knee of a wounded man. His violent exertions gave him a cramp in both thighs, so that he could barely walk; and in consequence the strong and active passed him until he was within a hundred yards of the rear, where the Indians were tomahawking the old and the wounded men. So close were they that for a moment his heart sunk in despair; but he threw off his shoes; the touch of the cold ground seemed to revive him; and he again began to trot forward. He got around a bend in the road, passing half a dozen other fugitives; and long afterwards he told how well he remembered thinking that it would be some time before they would all be massacred and his own turn come. However, at this point the pursuit ceased, and a few miles farther on he had gained the middle of the flying troops, and like

them came to a walk. He fell in with a queer group, consisting of the sole remaining officer of the artillery, an infantry corporal, and a woman called Red-headed Nance. Both of the latter were crying, the corporal for the loss of his wife, the woman for the loss of her child. The worn-out officer hung on the corporal's arm, while Van Cleve "carried his fusee and accoutrements and led Nance; and in this social way arrived at Fort Jefferson a little after sunset."

Before reaching Fort Jefferson the wretched army encountered the regular regiment which had been so unfortunately detached a couple of days before the battle. The most severely wounded were left in the fort; and then the flight was renewed, until the disorganized and half-armed rabble reached Fort Washington, and the mean log huts of Cincinnati. Six hundred and thirty men had been killed and over two hundred and eighty wounded; less than five hundred, only about a third of the whole number engaged in the battle, remained unhurt. The Indians were rich with the spoil. They got horses, tents, guns, axes, powder, clothing, and blankets—in short everything their hearts prized. Their loss was comparatively slight; it may not have been one twentieth that of the whites. They did not at the moment follow up their victory, each band going off with its own share of the booty. But the triumph was so overwhelming, and the reward so great, that the war spirit received a great impetus in all the tribes. The bands of warriors that marched against the frontier were more numerous, more formidable, and bolder than ever.



When the remnant of the defeated army reached the banks of the Ohio, St. Clair sent his aide, Denny, to carry the news to Philadelphia, at that time the national capital. The river was swollen, there were incessant snowstorms, and ice formed heavily, so that it took twenty days of toil and cold before Denny reached Wheeling and got horses. For ten days more he rode over the bad winter roads, reaching Philadelphia with the evil tidings on the evening of December 19th. It was thus six weeks after the defeat of the army before the news was brought to the anxious Federal authorities.

The young officer called first on the Secretary of War; but as soon as the Secretary realized the importance of the information he had it conveyed to the President. Washington was at dinner, with some guests, and was called from the table to listen to the tidings of ill fortune. He returned with unmoved face, and at dinner, and at the reception which followed, he behaved with his usual stately courtesy to those whom he was entertaining, not so much as hinting at what he had heard. But when the last guest had gone, his pent-up wrath broke forth in one of those fits of volcanic fury which sometimes shattered his iron outward calm. Walking up and down the room he burst out in wild regret for the rout and disaster, and bitter invective against St. Clair, reciting how, in that very room, he had wished the unfortunate commander success and honor and had bidden him above all things beware of a surprise. "He went off with that last solemn warning thrown into his ears," spoke Washington as he

strode to and fro, "and yet to suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hacked, butchered, tomahawked, by a surprise, the very thing I guarded him against! O God, O God, he's worse than a murderer! How can he answer to his country!" Then, calming himself by a mighty effort: "General St. Clair shall have justice . . . he shall have full justice." And St. Clair did receive full justice, and mercy too, from both Washington and Congress. For the sake of his courage and honorable character they held him guiltless of the disaster for which his lack of capacity as a general was so largely accountable.

## CHAPTER XXII

### MAD ANTHONY WAYNE AND THE FIGHT OF THE FALLEN TIMBERS; 1792-1795

THE United States Government was almost as much demoralized by St. Clair's defeat as was St. Clair's own army. . There was little national glory or reputation to be won even by a successful Indian war; while defeat was a serious disaster to a government which was as yet far from firm in its seat. The Eastern people were lukewarm about a war in which they had no direct interest; and the foolish frontiersmen, instead of backing up the administration, railed at it. Under such conditions the national administration, instead of at once redoubling its efforts to ensure success by shock of arms, was driven to the ignoble necessity of yet again striving for a hopeless peace.

In pursuance of their timidly futile policy of friendliness, the representatives of the National Government, in the spring of 1792, sent peace envoys, with a flag of truce, to the hostile tribes. The unfortunate ambassadors thus chosen for sacrifice were Colonel John Hardin, the gallant but ill-starred leader of Kentucky horse; and a Federal officer, Major Alexander True-

man. In June they started towards the hostile towns, with one or two companions, and soon fell in with some Indians, who on being shown the white flag, and informed of the object of their visit, received them with every appearance of good will. But this was merely a mask. A few hours later the treacherous savages suddenly fell upon and slew the messengers of peace. The Indians never punished the treachery and when the chiefs wrote to Washington, they mentioned with cool indifference that "you sent us at different times different speeches, the bearers whereof our foolish young men killed on their way."

In spite of the murder of the flag-of-truce men, renewed efforts were made to secure a peace by treaty. In the fall of 1792 Rufus Putnam, on behalf of the United States, succeeded in concluding a treaty with the Wabash and Illinois tribes, which at least served to keep many of their young braves out of actual hostilities. In the following spring three commissioners—Benjamin Lincoln, Beverly Randolph, and Timothy Pickering, all men of note—were sent to persuade the Miami tribes and their allies to agree to a peace.

In May, 1793, the commissioners went to Niagara, where they held meetings with various Iroquois chiefs and exchanged friendly letters with the British officers of the posts, who assured them that they would help in the effort to conclude a peace. Captain Brant, the Iroquois chief, acted as spokesman for a deputation of the hostile Indians from the Miami, where a great council was being held, at which not only the northwestern

tribes, but the Five Nations, were in attendance. The commissioners then sailed to the Detroit River, having first sent home a strong remonstrance against the activity displayed by the new commander on the Ohio, Wayne, whose vigorous measures, they said, had angered the Indians and were considered by the British "unfair and unwarrantable."

But at Detroit they found they could do nothing. Brant and the Iroquois urged the northwestern tribes not to yield any point, and promised them help, telling the British agent, McKee, evidently to his satisfaction, "we came here not only to assist with our advice, but other ways, . . . we came here with arms in our hands"; and they insisted that the country belonged to the confederated tribes in common, and so could not be surrendered save by all. They refused to consider any proposition which did not acknowledge the Ohio as the boundary between them and the United States; and so, towards the end of August, the commissioners returned to report their failure. The final solution of the problem was thus left to the sword of Wayne.

Major-General Anthony Wayne, a Pennsylvanian, had been chosen to succeed St. Clair in the command of the army; and on him devolved the task of wresting victory from the formidable forest tribes, fighting in the almost impenetrable wilderness of their own country. Of all men, he was the best fitted for the work. In the Revolutionary War no other general won such a reputation for hard fighting, and for dogged courage. By experience he had grown to add caution

to his dauntless energy. Once, after the battle of Brandywine, when he had pushed close to the enemy, with his usual fearless self-confidence, he was surprised in a night attack by the equally daring British general Grey, and his brigade was severely punished with the bayonet. It was a lesson he never forgot; it did not in any way abate his self-reliance or his fiery ardor, but it taught him the necessity of forethought, of thorough preparation, and of ceaseless watchfulness. A few days later he led the assault at Germantown, driving the Hessians before him with the bayonet. This was always his favorite weapon; he had the utmost faith in coming to close quarters, and he trained his soldiers to trust the steel. At Monmouth he turned the fortunes of the day by his stubborn and successful resistance to the repeated bayonet charges of the Guards and Grenadiers. His greatest stroke was the storming of Stony Point, where in person he led the midnight rush of his troops over the walls of the British fort. He fought with his usual hardihood against Cornwallis; and at the close of the Revolutionary War he made a successful campaign against the Creeks in Georgia. During this campaign the Creeks one night tried to surprise his camp, and attacked with resolute ferocity, putting to flight some of the troops; but Wayne rallied them and sword in hand he led them against the savages, who were overthrown and driven from the field.

As soon as Wayne reached the Ohio, in June, 1792, he set about reorganizing the army. He had as a nucleus the remnant of St. Clair's beaten forces; and

to this were speedily added hundreds of recruits enlisted under new legislation by Congress, and shipped to him as fast as the recruiting officers could send them. Only rigorous and long-continued discipline and exercise under a commander both stern and capable, could turn such men into soldiers fit for the work Wayne had before him. He saw this at once, and realized that a premature movement meant nothing but another defeat; and he began by careful and patient labor to turn his horde of raw recruits into a compact and efficient army, which he might use with his customary energy and decision. When he took command of the army—or “Legion,” as he preferred to call it—the one stipulation he made was that the campaign should not begin until his ranks were full and his men thoroughly disciplined.

Towards the end of the summer of 1792 he established his camp on the Ohio, about twenty-seven miles below Pittsburg. He drilled both officers and men with unwearied patience, and gradually the officers became able to do the drilling themselves, while the men acquired the soldierly self-confidence of veterans. As the new recruits came in, they found themselves with an army which was rapidly learning how to maneuver with precision, to obey orders unhesitatingly, and to look forward eagerly to a battle with the foe. Throughout the winter Wayne kept at work, and by the spring he had under him twenty-five hundred regular soldiers who were already worthy to be trusted in a campaign.

In May, 1793, he brought his army down the Ohio to Fort Washington (Cincinnati), and near it he estab-

lished a camp which he christened Hobson's Choice. Here he was forced to wait the results of the fruitless negotiations carried on by the United States Peace Commissioners, and it was not until about the 1st of October that he was given permission to begin the campaign. Even when he was allowed to move his army forward, he was fettered by injunctions not to run any risks. Accordingly he shifted his army to a place some eighty miles north of Cincinnati, where he encamped for the winter, building a place of strength which he named Greeneville in honor of his old comrade in arms, General Greene. He sent forward a strong detachment of his troops to the site of St. Clair's defeat, where they built a post which was named Fort Recovery. The discipline of the army steadily improved, though now and then a soldier deserted.

In the spring of 1794, as soon as the ground was dry, Wayne prepared to advance towards the hostile towns and force a decisive battle. The mounted riflemen of Kentucky, who had been sent home at the beginning of winter, again joined him. Among these was Captain William Clark, brother of George Rogers Clark, and afterwards one of the two famous explorers who first crossed the continent to the Pacific. In May, he was sent from Fort Washington with twenty dragoons and sixty infantry to escort 700 pack-horses to Greeneville. When he was eighteen miles from Fort Washington, Indians attacked his van, driving off a few pack-horses; but Clark brought up his men from the rear and after a smart skirmish put the savages to flight.



On the last day of June a determined assault was made by the Indians on Fort Recovery, which was garrisoned by about two hundred men. Over two thousand warriors all told streamed down through the woods in long columns, and silently neared the fort. Here they found camped close to the walls a party of fifty dragoons and ninety riflemen that had escorted a brigade of pack-horses from Greeneville the day before, and were about to return with the unladen pack-horses. But soon after daybreak the Indians rushed their camp. Against such overwhelming numbers no effective resistance could be made. After a few moments' fight the men broke and ran to the fort, losing nineteen killed and as many wounded, together with two hundred pack-horses.

The Indians, flushed with success and rendered overconfident by their immense superiority in numbers, made a rush at the fort, hoping to carry it by storm. They were beaten back at once with severe loss; for in such work they were no match for their foes. They then surrounded the fort, kept up a harmless fire all day, and renewed it the following morning. In the night they bore off their dead, finding them with the help of torches; eight or ten of those nearest the fort they could not get. They then drew off and marched back to the Miami towns. At least twenty-five of them had been killed, and a great number wounded. They were much disheartened at the check, and the Upper Lake Indians began to go home.

Three weeks after the successful defense of Fort

Recovery, Wayne was joined by a large force of mounted volunteers from Kentucky, under General Scott; and on July 27th he set out towards the Miami towns. The Indians who watched his march brought word to the British that his army went twice as far in a day as St. Clair's, that he kept his scouts well out and his troops always in open order and ready for battle; that he exercised the greatest precaution to avoid an ambush or surprise, and that every night the camps of the different regiments were surrounded by breastworks of fallen trees so as to render a sudden assault hopeless.

Wayne showed his capacity as a commander by the use he made of his spies or scouts. It was on the fierce backwoods riflemen that he chiefly relied for news of the Indians; and they served him well. As skilful and hardy as the red warriors, much better marksmen, and even more daring, they took many scalps, harrying the hunting parties, and hanging on the outskirts of the big wigwam villages. They captured and brought in Indian after Indian, from whom Wayne got valuable information.

With his advance effectually covered by his scouts, and his army guarded by his own ceaseless vigilance, Wayne marched without opposition to the confluence of the Glaize and the Maumee, where the hostile Indian villages began, and whence they stretched to below the British fort. The savages were taken by surprise and fled without offering opposition; while Wayne halted, on August 8th, and spent a week in building a strong log stockade, with four good block-houses as bastions; he

christened the work Fort Defiance. The Indians had cleared and tilled immense fields, and the troops reveled in the fresh vegetables and ears of roasted corn, and enjoyed the rest, for during the march the labor of cutting a road through the thick forest had been very severe, while the water was bad and the mosquitoes were exceedingly troublesome.

From Fort Defiance Wayne sent a final offer of peace to the Indians, summoning them at once to send deputies to meet him. The letter was carried by Christopher Miller, and a Shawnee prisoner; and in it Wayne explained that Miller was a Shawnee by adoption, whom his soldiers had captured "six months since," while the Shawnee warrior had been taken but a couple of days before; and he warned the Indians that he had seven Indian prisoners, who had been well treated, but who would be put to death if Miller were harmed. The Indians did not molest Miller, but sought to obtain delay, and would give no definite answer; whereupon Wayne advanced against them, having laid waste and destroyed all their villages and fields.

His army marched on the 15th, and on the 18th reached Roche du Bout, by the Maumee Rapids, only a few miles from the British fort. Next day was spent in building a rough breastwork to protect the stores and baggage and in reconnoitering the Indian position, which was close to the British.

On August 20, 1794, Wayne marched to battle against the Indians. They lay about six miles down the river, near the British fort, in a place known as the Fallen

Timbers, because there the thick forest had been overturned by a whirlwind, and the dead trees lay piled across one another in rows. All the baggage was left behind in the breastwork, with a sufficient guard. The army numbered about three thousand men; two thousand were regulars, and there were a thousand mounted volunteers from Kentucky under General Scott.

The army marched down the left or north branch of the Maumee. A small force of mounted volunteers—Kentucky militia—were in front. On the right flank the squadron of dragoons, the regular cavalry, marched next to the river. The infantry were formed in two long lines, the second some little distance behind the first; the left of the first line being continued by the companies of regular riflemen and light troops. Scott, with the body of the mounted volunteers, was thrown out on the left with instructions to turn the flank of the Indians, thus effectually preventing them from performing a similar feat at the expense of the Americans.

The Indians stretched in a line nearly two miles long at right angles to the river, and began the battle confidently enough. They attacked and drove in the volunteers who were in advance and the firing then began along the entire front. But their success was momentary. Wayne ordered the first line of the infantry to advance with trailed arms, so as to rouse the savages from their cover, then to fire into their backs at close range, and to follow them hard with the bayonet, so as to give them no time to load. The regular cavalry were directed to charge the left flank of the enemy;

for Wayne had determined "to put the horse-hoof on the moccasin." Both orders were executed with spirit and vigor.

It would have been difficult to find more unfavorable ground for cavalry; nevertheless the dragoons rode against their foes at a gallop, with broadswords swinging, the horses dodging in and out among the trees and jumping the fallen logs. They received a fire at close quarters which emptied a dozen saddles, both captains being shot down; but they burst among the savages at full speed, and routed them in a moment.

At the same time the first line of the infantry charged with equal impetuosity and success. The Indians delivered one volley and were then roused from their hiding-places with the bayonet; as they fled they were shot down, and if they attempted to halt they were at once assailed and again driven with the bayonet. They could make no stand at all, and the battle was won with ease. So complete was the success that only the first line of regulars was able to take part in the fighting; the second line, and Scott's horse-riflemen on the left, in spite of their exertions, were unable to reach the battle-field until the Indians were driven from it; "there not being a sufficiency of the enemy for the Legion to play on," wrote Clark. The entire action lasted under forty minutes. Less than a thousand of the Americans were actually engaged. They pursued the beaten and fleeing Indians for two miles, the cavalry halting only when under the walls of the British fort.

Thirty-three of the Americans were killed and one

hundred wounded. The Indians lost two or three times as many. It was the most complete and important victory ever gained over the northwestern Indians during the forty years' warfare to which it put an end; and it was the only considerable pitched battle in which they lost more than their foes. They suffered heavily among their leaders; no less than eight Wyandot chiefs were slain.

From the fort the British had seen, with shame and anger, the rout of their Indian allies. Their commander wrote to Wayne to demand his intentions. Wayne responded that he thought they were made sufficiently evident by his successful battle with the savages. The Englishman wrote in resentment of this curt reply, complaining that Wayne's soldiers had approached within pistol-shot of the fort, and threatening to fire upon them if the offense was repeated. Wayne responded by summoning him to abandon the fort; a summons which he of course refused to heed. Wayne then gave orders to destroy everything up to the very walls of the fort, and his commands were carried out to the letter; not only were the Indian villages burned and their crops cut down, but all the houses and buildings of the British agents and traders, including McKee's, were leveled to the ground. The British commander did not dare to interfere or make good his threats; nor, on the other hand, did Wayne dare to storm the fort, which was well built and heavily armed.

After completing his work of destruction, Wayne marched his army back to Fort Defiance. Here he

was obliged to halt for over a fortnight while he sent back to Fort Recovery for provisions. He employed the time in work on the fort, which he strengthened so that it would stand an attack by a regular army.

On September 14th the Legion started westward towards the Miami towns at the junction of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph rivers, the scene of Harmar's disaster. In four days the towns were reached, the Indians being too cowed to offer resistance. Here the army spent six weeks, burned the towns and destroyed the fields and stores of the hostile tribes, and built a fort which was christened Fort Wayne. The mounted volunteers grew mutinous, but were kept in order by their commander, Scott, a rough, capable backwoods soldier. Their term of service at length expired and they were sent home; and the regulars of the Legion, leaving a garrison at Fort Wayne, marched back to Greenville, and reached it on November 2d, just three months and six days after they started from it on their memorable and successful expedition. Wayne had shown himself the best general ever sent to war with the northwestern Indians; and his victorious campaign was the most noteworthy ever carried on against them, for it brought about the first lasting peace on the border. It was one of the most striking and weighty feats in the winning of the West.

The battle of the Fallen Timbers opened the eyes of the Indians to the fact that, though the British would urge them to fight, and would secretly aid them, yet in the last resort the King's troops would not come to











their help by proceeding to actual war. Accordingly all their leaders recognized that it was time to make peace.

In November, the Wyandots from Sandusky sent ambassadors to Wayne at Greenville. Wayne spoke to them with his usual force and frankness. He told them he pitied them for their folly in listening to the British, who were very glad to urge them to fight and to give them ammunition, but who had neither the power nor the inclination to help them, when the time of trial came; that hitherto the Indians had felt only the weight of his little finger, but that he would surely destroy all the tribes in the near future, if they did not make peace. They went away much surprised, and resolved on peace; and the other tribes followed their example.

This was followed in the summer of 1795 by the formal Treaty of Greenville, at which Wayne, on behalf of the United States, made a definite peace with all the northwestern tribes. No less than eleven hundred and thirty Indians were present at the treaty grounds, including a full delegation from every hostile tribe. All solemnly covenanted to keep the peace; and they agreed to surrender to the whites all of what is now southern Ohio and southeastern Indiana, and various reservations elsewhere, as at Fort Wayne, Fort Defiance, Detroit, and Michilimackinac, the lands around the French towns, and the hundred and fifty thousand acres near the Falls of the Ohio, which had been allotted to Clark and his soldiers. The Government, in its

turn, acknowledged the Indian title to the remaining territory, and agreed to pay the tribes annuities aggregating nine thousand five hundred dollars. All prisoners on both sides were restored.

Wayne had brought peace by the sword. It was the first time the border had been quiet for over a generation; and for fifteen years the quiet lasted unbroken.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE PURCHASE OF LOUISIANA, 1803

**T**HE growth of the West was very rapid in the years immediately succeeding the peace with the Indians and the treaties with England and Spain. As the settlers poured into what had been the Indian-haunted wilderness it speedily became necessary to cut it into political divisions. Kentucky had already been admitted as a State in 1792; Tennessee likewise became a State in 1796, and the Territory of Mississippi was organized in 1798 to include the country west of Georgia and south of Tennessee, which had been ceded by the Spaniards under Pinckney's treaty.

Statesmen and diplomats have some share in shaping the conditions under which a country is finally taken; in the eye of history they often usurp much more than their proper share; but in reality they are able to bring matters to a conclusion only because adventurous settlers, in defiance or disregard of governmental action, have pressed forward into the longed-for land. The vital question as to whether the land shall be taken at all, upon no matter what terms, is answered not by the diplomats, but by the people themselves. The settlers

had already thronged into the disputed territories or strenuously pressed forward against their boundaries.

So it was with the acquisition of Louisiana, which was to be the next step in the winning of the West. Jefferson, Livingston, and their fellow-statesmen and diplomats concluded the treaty which determined the manner in which it came into our possession; but they did not really have much to do with fixing the terms even of this treaty; for the Americans would have won the region in any event. The real history of the acquisition of Louisiana is the story of the great westward movement begun in 1769.

The Spanish rulers realized fully that they were too weak effectively to cope with the Americans, and, as the pressure upon them grew ever heavier and more menacing, they began to fear not only for Louisiana but also for Mexico. They clung tenaciously to all their possessions; but they were willing to sacrifice a part, if by so doing they could erect a barrier for the defense of the remainder. The needs of the Spaniards seemed to Napoleon his opportunity. By the bribe of a petty Italian principality, he persuaded the Bourbon King of Spain to cede Louisiana to the French, at the treaty of San Ildefonso, concluded in October, 1800. The cession was agreed to by the Spaniards on the express pledge that the territory should not be transferred to any other power, and chiefly for the purpose of erecting a barrier which might stay the American advance, and protect the rest of the Spanish possessions.

Every effort was made to keep the cession from being











made public, and owing to various political complications it was not consummated for a couple of years; but meanwhile it was impossible to prevent rumors from going abroad, and the mere hint of such a project was enough to throw the West into a fever of excitement.

Even Jefferson, the least warlike of presidents, could see that for France to take Louisiana meant war with the United States sooner or later; and as, above all things else, he desired peace he made every effort to secure the coveted territory by purchase.

It was, however, no argument of Jefferson's or of the American diplomats, Livingston and Monroe, but the inevitable trend of events that finally brought about a change in Napoleon's mind. The army he sent to Hayti wasted away by disease and in combat with the blacks, and thereby not only diminished the forces he intended to throw into Louisiana, but also gave him a terrible object lesson as to what the fate of these forces was certain ultimately to be. The attitude of England and Austria grew steadily more hostile, and his most trustworthy advisers impressed on Napoleon's mind the steady growth of the Western-American communities, and the implacable hostility with which they were certain to regard any power that seized or attempted to hold New Orleans. So Livingston was astonished to find that Napoleon had suddenly changed front, and that there was every prospect of gaining what for months had seemed impossible. For some time there was haggling over the terms. Napoleon, having once

made up his mind to part with Louisiana, rapidly abated his demands; and the cession was finally made for fifteen millions of dollars.

Meanwhile in March, 1803, the French Prefect, Laussat, arrived to take possession of Louisiana for his own government. He had no idea that Napoleon intended to cede it to the United States. On the contrary, he showed that he regarded the French as the heirs, not only to the Spanish territory, but of the Spanish hostility to the Americans, and he made all his preparations as if New Orleans was to become the center of an aggressive military government. There was much friction between him and the Spanish officials; he complained bitterly to the home government of the insolence and intrigues of the Spanish party. He also portrayed in scathing terms the gross corruption of the Spanish authorities.

Laussat soon discovered with chagrin that he was to turn the country over to the Americans almost immediately. This change in the French attitude greatly increased the friction with the Spaniards. The Spanish home government was furious with indignation at Napoleon for having violated his word, and only the weakness of Spain prevented war between it and France. It was not until December 1, 1803, that Laussat took final possession of the provinces. Twenty days afterwards he turned them over to the American authorities.

Naturally there was a fertile field for seditious agitation in New Orleans, a city of mixed population, where

the numerically predominant race felt a puzzled distrust for the nation of which it suddenly found itself an integral part, and from past experience firmly believed in the evanescent nature of any political connection it might have, whether with Spain, France, or the United States. The Creoles murmured because they were not given the same privileges as American citizens in the old States, and yet showed themselves indifferent to such privileges as they were given. They were indignant because the National Government prohibited the importation of slaves into Louisiana, and for the moment even the transfer thither of slaves from the old States. Representatives of the French and Spanish governments still remained in Louisiana, and by their presence and their words tended to keep alive a disaffection for the United States Government.

Furthermore, there already existed in New Orleans a very peculiar class, later known as filibusters. They were men ready at any time to enter into any plot for armed conquest of one of the Spanish-American countries. They did not care in the least what form the expedition took. They were willing to join the Mexican exiles in an effort to rouse Mexico to throw off the yoke of Spain, or to aid any province of Mexico to revolt from the rest, or to help the leaders of any defeated faction who wished to try an appeal to arms.

Under such conditions New Orleans, even more than the rest of the West, seemed to offer an inviting field for adventurers whose aim was both revolutionary and

piratical. A particularly spectacular adventurer of this type now appeared in the person of Aaron Burr. His career had been striking. He had been Vice-President of the United States. He had lacked but one vote of being made President, when the election of 1800 was thrown into the House of Representatives. As friend or as enemy he had been thrown intimately and on equal terms with the greatest political leaders of the day. There was not a man in the country who did not know about the brilliant and unscrupulous party leader who had killed Hamilton, and who, by a nearly successful intrigue, had come within one vote of defeating Jefferson for the presidency.

In New York, Aaron Burr had shown himself as adroit as he was unscrupulous in the use of all the arts of the machine manager. In the State he was the leader of the Democratic party, which under his lead crushed the Federalists; and as a reward he was given the second highest office in the nation. Then his open enemies and secret rivals all combined against him. He made an obstinate fight to hold his own; but he was hopelessly beaten. Both his fortune and his local political prestige were ruined; he realized that his chance for a career in New York was over.

He was, however, a statesman of national reputation; and he turned his restless eyes toward the West, which for a score of years had seethed in a turmoil out of which it seemed that a bold spirit might make its own profit. He had already been obscurely connected with separatist intrigues in the Northeast; and he deter-

mined to embark in similar intrigues on an infinitely grander scale in the West and Southwest.

It is small wonder that the conspiracy, of which such a man was head, should make a noise out of all proportion to its real weight. The conditions were such that if Burr journeyed west he was certain to attract universal attention and to be received with marked enthusiasm. No man of his prominence in national affairs had ever traveled through the wild new commonwealths on the Mississippi. The men who were founding states and building towns on the wreck of the conquered wilderness were sure to be flattered by the appearance of so notable a man among them, and to be impressed not only by his reputation, but by his charm of manner and brilliancy of intellect.

But the time for separatist movements in the West had passed, while the time for arousing the West to the conquest of part of Spanish-America had hardly yet come. With the purchase of Louisiana all deep-lying causes of Western discontent had vanished. The West was prosperous, and was attached to the National Government. Its leaders might still enjoy a discussion with Burr or among themselves concerning separatist principles in the abstract, but nobody of any weight in the community would allow such plans as those of Burr to be put into effect.

Burr's career, however, was already ruined. Jefferson had issued a proclamation for his arrest; and even before this, the fabric of the conspiracy had crumbled into shifting dust. There was no real support for Burr



anywhere. All his plot had been but a dream; at the last he could not do anything which justified, in even the smallest degree, the alarm and curiosity he had excited. He was put on trial for high treason, but he was acquitted on a technicality.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE EXPLORERS OF THE FAR WEST, 1804-1807

**T**HE Far West, the West beyond the Mississippi, had been thrust on Jefferson, and given to the nation, by the rapid growth of the Old West, the West that lay between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi. The next step was to explore this territory thus newly added to the national domain, for nobody knew much about it.

The first of several expeditions to explore this vast region was planned by Jefferson himself and authorized by Congress. Nominally its purpose was to find out the most advantageous places for the establishment of trading stations with the Indian tribes; but in reality it was purely a voyage of exploration, planned with intent to ascend the Missouri to its head, and thence to cross the continent to the Pacific. The explorers were carefully instructed to report upon the geography, physical characteristics, and zoölogy of the region traversed, as well as upon its wild human denizens.

The two officers chosen to carry through the work belonged to families already honorably distinguished for service on the Western border. One was Captain Meriwether Lewis, representatives of whose family had

served so prominently in Dunmore's war; the other was Lieutenant William Clark, a younger brother of George Rogers Clark. Clark had served with credit through Wayne's campaigns, and had taken part in the victory of the Fallen Timbers. Lewis had seen his first service when he enlisted as a private in the forces which were marshaled to put down the whisky insurrection. Later he served under Clark in Wayne's army. He had also been President Jefferson's private secretary.

The young officers started on their trip accompanied by twenty-seven men who intended to make the whole journey. Of this number one, the interpreter and incidentally the best hunter in the party, was a half-breed; two were French voyageurs, one was a negro servant of Clark, nine were volunteers from Kentucky, and fourteen were regular soldiers. All, however, except the black slave, were enlisted in the army before starting, so that they might be kept under regular discipline. In addition to these twenty-seven men there were seven soldiers and nine voyageurs who started to go only to the Mandan villages on the Missouri, where the party intended to spend the first winter. They embarked in three large boats, abundantly supplied with arms, powder, and lead, clothing, gifts for the Indians, and provisions.

From St. Louis the explorers pushed off in May, 1804, and soon began stemming the strong current of the muddy Missouri, to whose unknown sources they intended to ascend. For two or three weeks they

occasionally passed farms and hamlets—the most important being St. Charles, where the people were all Creoles. The explorers in their journal commented upon the good temper and vivacity of these *habitants*, but dwelt on the shiftlessness they displayed and their readiness to sink back towards savagery, although they were brave and hardy enough. The next most considerable town was peopled mainly by Americans; while the last squalid little village they passed claimed as one of its occasional residents old Daniel Boone himself.

As the party gradually worked its way northwestward, it began to come upon those characteristic animals of the Great Plains—the buffalo and elk in astounding numbers; the pronghorned antelope, the blacktail deer, the coyotes, whose uncanny wailing after nightfall varied the sinister baying of the gray wolves; and notably the prairie dogs, whose populous villages awakened the lively curiosity of Lewis and Clark.

In their note-books the two captains faithfully described all these new animals and all the strange sights they saw in a narrative singularly accurate and entirely free from boastfulness and exaggeration. But what was of greater importance, the two young captains kept good discipline among the men; they never hesitated to punish severely any wrong-doer; but they were never over-severe; and as they did their full part of the work, and ran all the risks and suffered all the hardship exactly like the other members of the expedition,

they were regarded by their followers with devoted affection, and were served with loyalty and cheerfulness.

With all the Indian tribes the two explorers held councils, and distributed presents, especially medals, among the head chiefs and warriors, informing them of the transfer of the territory from Spain to the United States. The Indians all professed much satisfaction at the change, which of course they did not in the least understand, and for which they cared nothing. This easy acquiescence gave much groundless satisfaction to Lewis and Clark, who further strove to make each tribe swear peace with its neighbors. After some hesitation the tribes usually consented to this, and as promptly went to war again, for in reality the Indians had only the vaguest idea as to what was meant by the ceremonies and the hoisting of the American flag.

As the fall weather grew cold, the party reached the Mandan village, where they halted and went into camp for the winter, building huts and a stout stockade which they christened Fort Mandan.

In the spring of 1805, Lewis and Clark again started westward, first sending downstream ten of their companions, to carry home the notes of their trip so far and a few valuable specimens. The party that started westward numbered thirty-two adults all told; for one sergeant had died, and two or three persons had volunteered at the Mandan villages, including a rather worthless French "squaw-man," with an intelligent Indian wife, whose baby was but a few weeks old.

From the Little Missouri on to the head of the Mis-











souri proper the explorers passed through a region literally swarming with game. In their journals they dwelt continually on the innumerable herds they encountered both while traveling upstream and again the following year when they were returning. Ordinarily all the kinds of game were very tame. Sometimes one of the many herds of elk that lay boldly, even at midday, on the sand-bars, or on the brush-covered points, would wait until the explorers were within twenty yards of them before starting. The buffalo would scarcely move out of the path at all, and the bulls sometimes, even when unmolested, threatened to assail the hunters. Once, on the return voyage, when Clark was descending the Yellowstone River, a vast herd of buffalo, swimming and wading, plowed its way across the stream where it was a mile broad, in a column so thick that the explorers had to draw up on shore and wait for an hour, until it passed by, before continuing their journey. Two or three times the expedition was thus brought to a halt; and as the buffalo were so plentiful, and so easy to kill, and as their flesh was very good, they were the mainstay for the explorers' table. Both going and returning this wonderful hunting country was a place of plenty.

There was one kind of game which they at times found altogether too familiar. This was the grizzly bear. They found that the Indians greatly feared these bears, and after their first encounters they themselves treated them with much respect. Again and again these huge bears attacked the explorers of their

own accord, when neither molested nor threatened. They galloped after the hunters when they met them on horseback even in the open; and they attacked them just as freely when they found them on foot. To go through the brush was dangerous; again and again one or another of the party was charged and forced to take to a tree, at the foot of which the bear sometimes mounted guard for hours before going off. When wounded, the beasts fought with desperate courage, and showed astonishing tenacity of life, charging any number of assailants, and succumbing but slowly even to mortal wounds. In one case a bear that was on shore actually plunged into the water and swam out to attack one of the canoes as it passed.

As they journeyed upstream through the bright summer weather, though they worked hard, it was work of a kind which was but a long holiday. At nightfall they camped by the boats on the river bank. Each day some of the party spent in hunting, either along the river-bottoms through the groves of cottonwoods with shimmering, rustling leaves, or away from the river where the sunny prairies stretched into seas of brown grass, or where groups of rugged hills stood, fantastic in color and outline, and with stunted pines growing on the sides of their steep ravines. The only real suffering was that which occasionally befell someone who got lost, and was out for days at a time, until he exhausted all his powder and lead before finding the party.

Fall had nearly come when they reached the head-

waters of the Missouri. The end of the holiday-time was at hand, for they had before them the labor of crossing the great mountains so as to strike the headwaters of the Columbia. Their success at this point depended somewhat upon the Indian wife of the Frenchman who had joined them at Mandan. She had been captured from one of the Rocky Mountain tribes, and they relied on her as interpreter. Partly through her aid, and partly by their own exertions, they were able to find, and make friends with, a band of wandering Shoshones, from whom they got horses. Having cached their boats and most of their goods they started westward through the forest-clad passes of the Rockies, where the game was far less abundant than on the plains and far harder to kill. The work was hard, and the party suffered much from toil and hunger before they struck one of the tributaries of the Snake sufficiently low down to enable them once more to go by boat.

They now met many Indians of various tribes, all of them very different from the Indians of the western plains. At this time the Indians, both east and west of the Rockies, already owned numbers of horses. Although they had a few guns, they relied mainly on the spears and tomahawks, and the bows and arrows with which they had warred and hunted from time immemorial. Around the mouth of the Columbia, however, the explorers found that the Indians knew a good deal about the whites; the river had been discovered by Captain Gray of Boston thirteen years before, and ships came

there continually; while some of the Indian tribes were occasionally visited by traders from the British fur companies.

With one or two of these tribes the explorers had some difficulty, and owed their safety to their unceasing vigilance, and to the prompt decision with which they gave the Indians to understand that they would tolerate no bad treatment, while they themselves refrained carefully from committing any wrong. By most of the tribes they were well received, and obtained from them not only information of the route, but also a welcome supply of food. At first they rather shrank from eating the dogs which formed the favorite dish of the Indians; but after a while they grew quite reconciled to dog's flesh; and in their journals noted that they preferred it to lean elk and deer meat, and were much more healthy while eating it.

They had reached the Pacific coast before cold weather set in, and there they passed the winter. In March, 1806, they started eastward to retrace their steps. At first they did not live well, for it was before the time when the salmon came upstream, and game was not common. When they reached the snow-covered mountains, there came another period of toil and starvation, and they were glad indeed when they emerged once more on the happy hunting-grounds of the Great Plains. They found their caches undisturbed. Early in July they separated for a time, Clark descending the Yellowstone and Lewis the Missouri, until they met at the junction of the two











ivers. The party which went down the Yellowstone at one time split into two, Clark taking command of one division, and a sergeant of the other; they built their own canoes, some of them made out of hollowed trees, while the others were bull boats, made of buffalo hides stretched on a frame.

To Lewis there befell several adventures. Once, while he was out with three men, a party of eight Blackfoot warriors joined them and suddenly made a treacherous attack upon them and strove to carry off their guns and horses. But the wilderness veterans sprang to arms with a readiness that had become second nature. One of them killed an Indian with a knife thrust; Lewis himself shot another Indian, and the remaining six fled, carrying with them one of Lewis' horses, but losing four of their own, which the whites captured. This was the beginning of the long series of bloody skirmishes between the Blackfeet and the Rocky Mountain explorers and trappers. Clark, at about the same time, suffered at the hands of the Crows, who stole a number of his horses.

None of the party was hurt by the Indians, but, some time after the skirmish with the Blackfeet, Lewis was accidentally shot by one of the Frenchmen of the party and suffered much from the wound. Near the mouth of the Yellowstone Clark joined him, and the reunited company floated down the Missouri. Before they reached the Mandan villages they encountered two white men, the first strangers of their own color the party had seen for a year and a half. These were two

American hunters named Dickson and Hancock, who were going up to trap along the headwaters of the Missouri on their own account. They had come from the Illinois country a year before, to hunt and trap; they had been plundered, and one of them wounded, in an encounter with the fierce Sioux, but were undauntedly pushing forwards into the unknown wilderness towards the mountains.

These two hardy and daring adventurers formed the vanguard of the bands of hunters and trappers, the famous Rocky Mountain men, who were to roam hither and thither across the great West in lawless freedom for the next three quarters of a century. They accompanied the party back to the Mandan village; there Colter, one of the soldiers, joined them, so fascinated by the life of the wilderness that he was not willing to leave it. He proved to be the first to explore Yellowstone Park. The three turned their canoe upstream, while Lewis and Clark and the rest of the party drifted down past the Sioux, and after an uneventful voyage reached St. Louis in September, and forwarded to Jefferson an account of what they had done.

Close on their tracks followed the hunters, trappers, and fur traders who themselves made ready the way for the settlers whose descendants were to possess the land. As for the two leaders of the explorers, Lewis was soon made Governor of Louisiana Territory; and Clark was afterwards Governor of the same territory, when its name had been changed to Missouri. Neither of them did anything further of note; nor indeed was it neces-

sary, for they had performed a feat which will always give them a place on the honor roll of American worthies.

While Lewis and Clark were recrossing the continent from the Pacific coast, another army officer was conducting explorations which were only less important than theirs. This was Lieut. Zebulon Montgomery Pike. He was not by birth a Westerner, being from New Jersey, the son of an officer of the Revolutionary army; but his name will always be indelibly associated with the West.

Setting out from St. Louis in August, 1805, Pike turned his face towards the headwaters of the Mississippi, his purpose being both to explore the sources of that river, and to show to the Indians, and to the British fur traders among them, that the United States was sovereign over the country in fact as well as in theory. He started in a large keel boat, with twenty soldiers of the regular army. He and his regulars were forced to be their own pioneers and to do their own hunting, until, by dint of hard knocks and hard work, they grew experts, both as riflemen and woodsmen.

The expedition occasionally encountered parties of Indians. Pike handled them well, and speedily brought those with whom he came into contact to a proper frame of mind, showing good temper and at the same time prompt vigor in putting down any attempt at bullying. On the journey upstream only one misadventure befell the party. A couple of the men got lost while hunting and did not find the boat for six days, by which time they were nearly starved, having used up all their

ammunition, so that they could not shoot game. The winter was spent in what is now Minnesota. Pike made a permanent camp, where he kept most of his men, while he himself traveled hither and thither, using dog sleds after the snow fell. They lived on game: Pike, after the first enthusiasm of the sport had palled a little, commented on the hard slavery of a hunter's life and its vicissitudes; for on one day he might kill enough meat to last the whole party a week and, when that was exhausted, they might go three or four days without anything at all.

In his search for the source of the Mississippi he penetrated deep into the lovely lake-dotted region of forests and prairies which surrounds the headwaters of the river. He did not reach Lake Itasca; but he did explore the Leech Lake drainage system, which he mistook for the true source. In the spring he floated downstream and reached St. Louis on the last day of April, 1806.

In July he was again sent out, this time on a far more dangerous and important trip. He was to march west to the Rocky Mountains, and explore the country towards the head of the Rio Grande, where the boundary line between Mexico and Louisiana was very vaguely determined. His party, numbering twenty-three all told, was accompanied by fifty Osage Indians, chiefly women and children who had been captured by the Pottawattamies, and whose release and return to their homes had been brought about by the efforts of the United States Government. The presence of these

St. Louis in the Early Part of the 19th  
Century

Redrawn from a picture by Catlin









redeemed captives of course kept the Osages in good humor with Pike's party.

The party ascended the Osage River as far as it was navigable. They then procured horses and traveled to the great Pawnee village known as the Pawnee Republic, which gave its name to the Republican River. A Spanish military expedition, several hundred strong, had anticipated them, by traveling through the debatable land, and by seeking to impress upon the Indians that the power of the Spanish nation was still supreme. Pike, however, had small difficulty in getting the chiefs and warriors of the village to hoist the American flag instead of the Spanish ones that had just been left with them. But they showed a very decided disinclination to let him continue his journey westward. With perfect good temper, he gave them to understand that he would use force if they ventured to bar his passage; and they finally let him go by. Later he had a somewhat similar experience with a large Pawnee war party.

The explorers had now left behind them the fertile, tree-clad country, and had entered on the Great Plains, across which they journeyed to the Arkansas, and then up that river. All the early travelers seem to have been almost equally impressed by the interminable seas of grass, the strange, shifting rivers, and the swarming multitudes of the huge, shaggy-maned bison. No other wild animal of the same size, in any part of the world, existed in such incredible numbers.

When the party reached the Arkansas late in October,

four or five of the men journeyed down it and returned to the settled country. The others struck westward into the mountains, and late in November reached the neighborhood of the bold peak which was later named after Pike himself.

When winter set in with great severity soon afterwards, the blacktail deer, upon which the party had begun to rely for meat, migrated to the wintering grounds, and the explorers suffered even more from hunger than from cold. The horses suffered most; the extreme toil and scant pasturage weakened them so that some died from exhaustion and others fell over precipices.

Early in January, near the site of the present Canyon City, Pike found a valley where deer were plentiful. From here he himself, with a dozen of the hardiest soldiers, struck through the mountains towards the Rio Grande. In the Wet Mountain valley, which they reached in mid-January, 1807, starvation stared them in the face. There had been a heavy snowstorm; no game was to be seen; and they had been two days without food. Nine of the men, exhausted by hunger, could no longer travel on account of frozen feet. Two of the soldiers went out to hunt, but got nothing. At the same time, Pike and a Dr. Robinson started, determined, unless they could bring back meat, to stay out and die by themselves, rather than to go back to camp "and behold the misery of our poor lads." All day they tramped wearily through the heavy snow. Towards evening they came on a buffalo, and wounded

it; but, faint and weak from hunger, they shot badly, and the buffalo escaped—a disappointment literally as bitter as death. That night they sat up among some rocks unable to sleep because of the intense cold, shivering in their thin rags. But they were men of indomitable spirit, and next day, trudging painfully on, they at last succeeded, after another heartbreaking failure, in killing a buffalo. At midnight they staggered into camp with the meat, and all the party broke their four-days' fast.

After leaving this valley Pike and his men finally reached the Rio Grande, where the weather was milder and deer abounded. Here they built a little fort over which they flew the United States flag, though Pike well knew that he was in Spanish territory. When the Spanish commander at Santa Fé learned of their presence he promptly sent out a detachment of troops to bring them in, showing great courtesy, and elaborately pretending to believe that Pike had merely lost his way.

From Santa Fé Pike was sent home by a round-about route through Chihuahua, and through Texas. Being used to the simplicity of his own service, he was struck by the extravagance and luxury of the Spanish officers, who always traveled with sumpter-mules laden with delicacies; and he was no less struck with the laxity of discipline in all ranks. The Spanish cavalry were armed with lances and shields; the militia carried not only old-fashioned carbines but lassos and bows and arrows. There was small wonder that the Spanish

authorities, civil, military, and ecclesiastical alike, should wish to keep intruders out of the land, and should jealously guard the secret of their own weakness.

While these first rough explorations of the Far West were taking place, the Old West was steadily filling with population and becoming more and more a coherent portion of the Union. In the treaties made from time to time with the northwestern Indians, they ceded so much land that at last the entire northern bank of the Ohio was in the hands of the settlers. But the Indians still held northwestern Ohio and the northern portions of what are now Indiana and Illinois, so that the settlement at Detroit was quite isolated; as were the few little stockades, or groups of fur-traders' huts, in what are now northern Illinois and Wisconsin. The southern Indians also surrendered much territory, in various treaties. Georgia got control of much of the Indian land within her State limits. All the country between Knoxville and Nashville became part of Tennessee, so that the eastern and middle portions of the State were no longer sundered by a jutting fragment of wilderness, infested by Indian war parties whenever there were hostilities with the savages. The only Indian lands in Tennessee or Kentucky were those held by the Chickasaws, between the Tennessee and the Mississippi; and the Chickasaws were friendly to the Americans.

Year by year the West grew better able to defend itself, if attacked, and more formidable in the event of its being necessary to undertake offensive warfare.

Kentucky and Tennessee had become populous States, no longer fearing Indian inroads; but able, on the contrary, to equip powerful armies for the aid of the settlers in the more scantily peopled regions north and south of them. Ohio was also growing steadily; and in the territory of Indiana, including what is now Illinois, and the territory of Mississippi, including what is now northern Alabama, there were already many settlers.

During the dozen years which opened with Wayne's campaign, saw the treaties of Jay and Pinckney, and closed with the explorations of Lewis, Clark, and Pike, the West had grown with the growth of a giant, and for the first time had achieved peace. The territories which had been won by war from the Indians and by treaty from Spain, France, and England, and which had been partially explored, were not yet entirely our own. Much had been accomplished by the deeds of the Indian-fighters, treaty-makers, and wilderness-wanderers; far more had been accomplished by the steady push of the settler folk themselves, as they thrust ever westward, and carved states out of the forest and prairie; but much yet remained to be done before the West would reach its natural limits and would fill from frontier to frontier with populous commonwealths of its own citizens.















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